



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

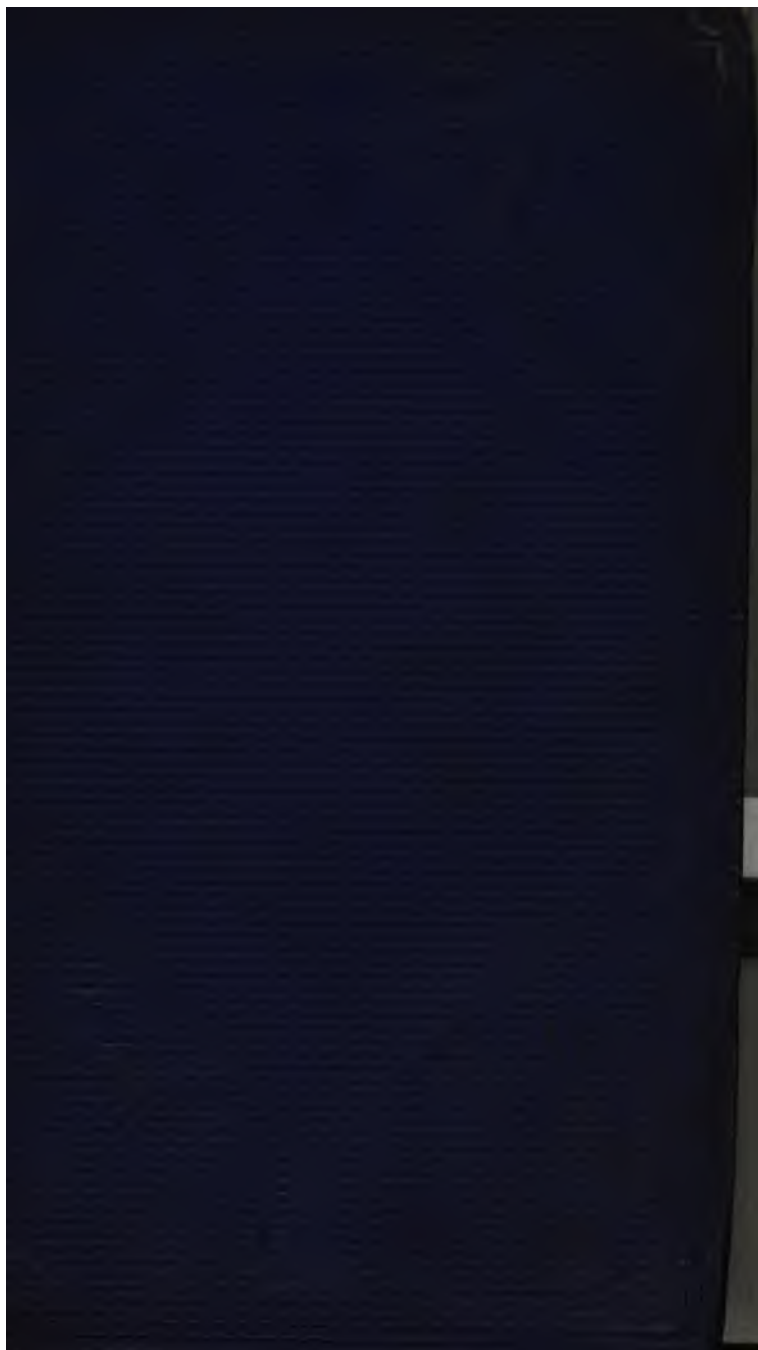
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

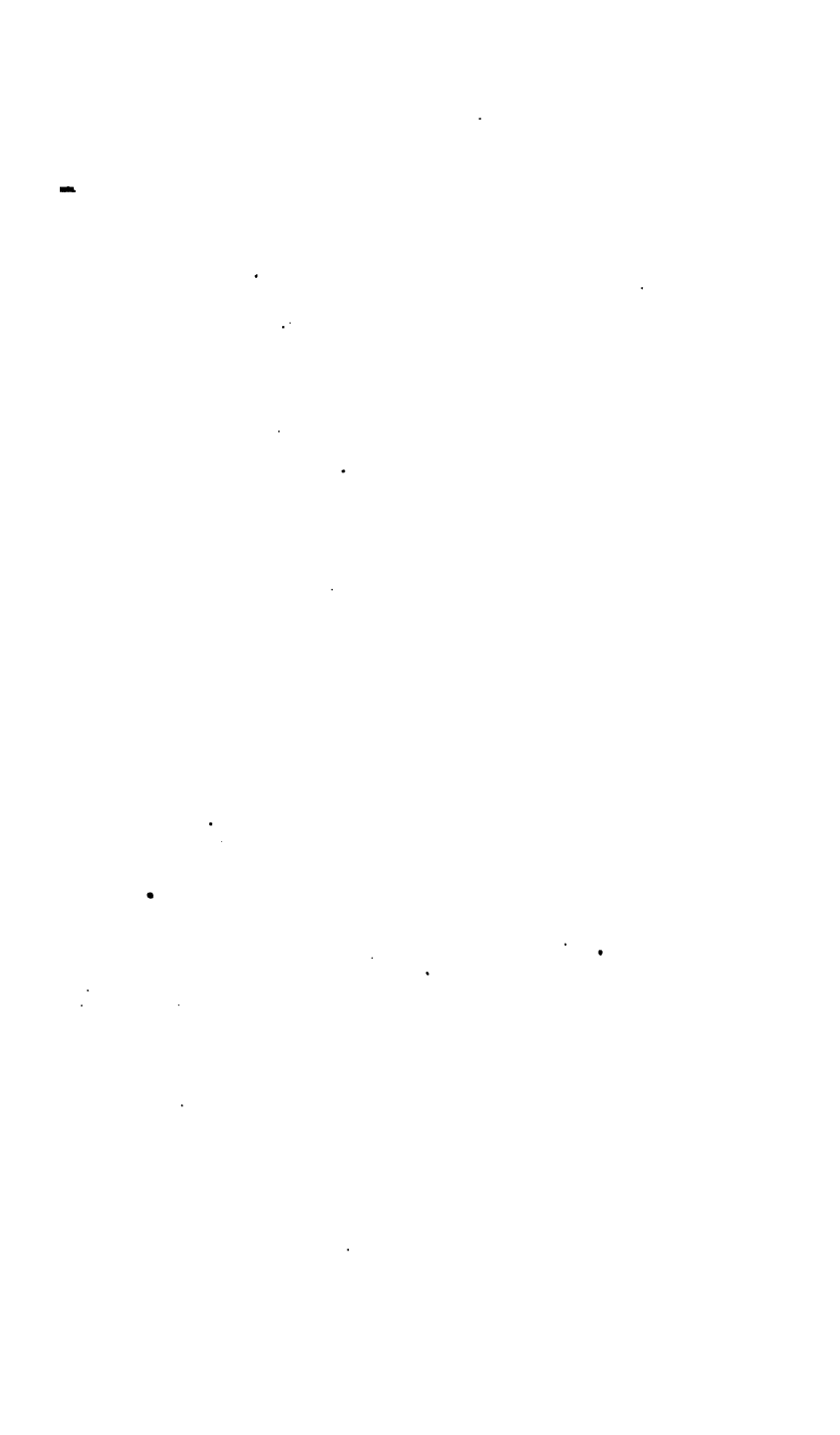
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

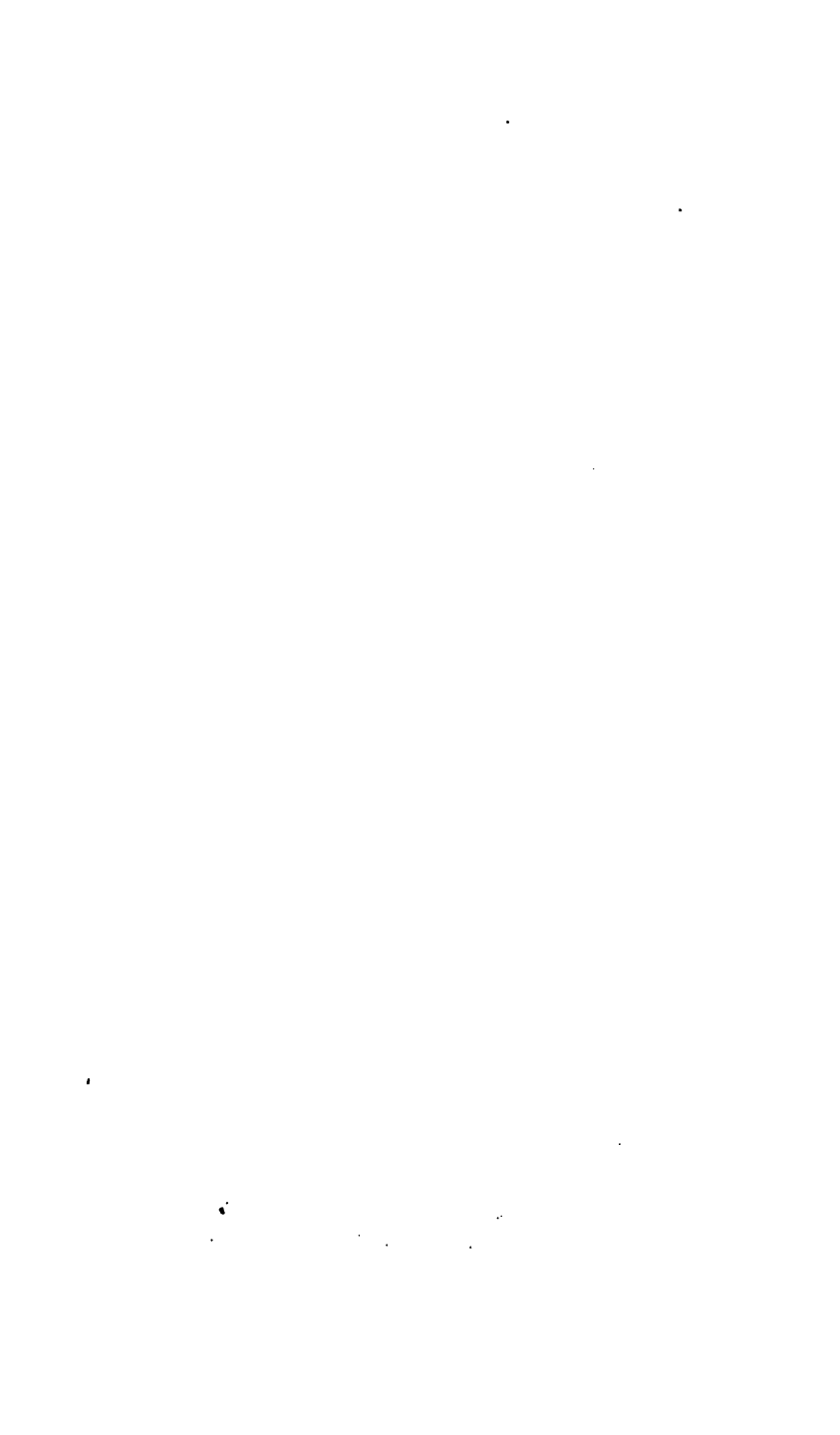




600076164U







ONCE UPON A TIME.

BY CHARLES KNIGHT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

~~~~~  
"The old bees die, the young possess their hive."

SHAKESPEARE: *Lucrece*.  
~~~~~



LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1854.

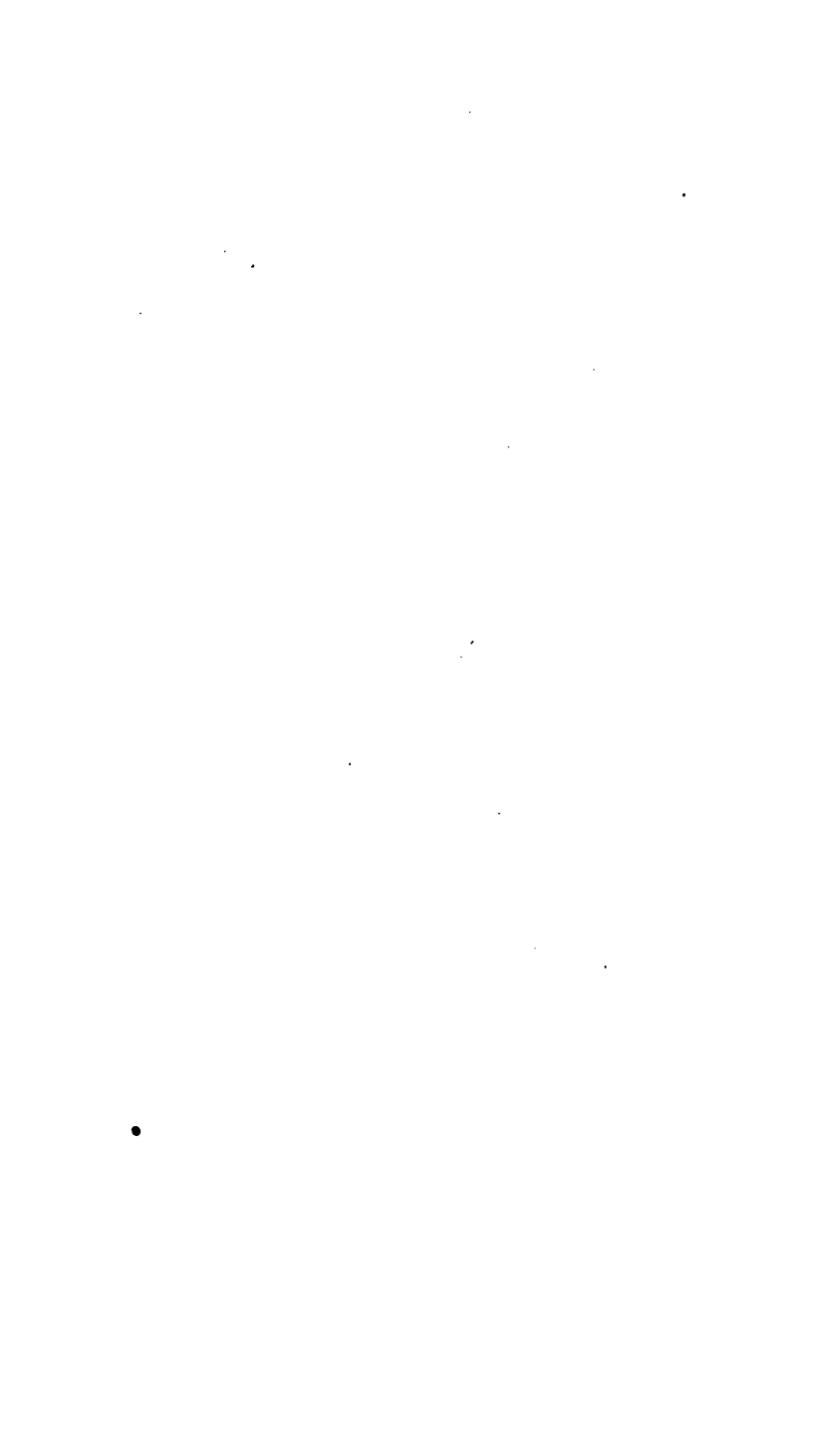
270. g 331.

LONDON: PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET,
AND CHARING CROSS.

•

TO
HENRY, LORD BROUGHAM,
THE UNWEARIED ADVOCATE OF PROGRESS,
THESE SKETCHES
OF SOME OF THE STAGES OF TRANSITION FROM THE PAST
TO THE PRESENT
ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

December, 1853.



SOME of the pieces in these volumes have been printed before, chiefly in periodical works. Others are new. They are here presented, as far as the nature of the subjects will admit, in a chronological succession. This arrangement has involved many alterations in some of the republished articles.

It is scarcely necessary to indicate the publications in which a portion of these slight things have previously appeared, except to say that some of the shorter pieces have had the advantage of the popularity of Mr. Dickens' 'Household Words.'

The title, 'Once upon a Time,' which, as the commencement of 'Old Wives' Tales,' lingers in our childish memories, may suggest something of the unpretending nature of these Sketches. I think they are not untrue representations of other states of society; but they have no pretensions to the completeness which History, even Domestic History, demands. They are Glimpses of the Past. Yet as such they may have some value beyond that of amusing a vacant hour. The Past is a solemn word :—

“ The Past,
Big with deep warnings of the proper tenure
By which thou hast the earth: the Present for thee
Shall have distinct and trembling beauty, seen
Beside that Past's own shade.”

BROWNING, *Paracelsus*.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

	Page
THE PASTONS	1
THE DISCOVERER OF MADEIRA	54
THE SILENT HIGHWAY	69
THE YOUNGER SON	101
HANG OUT YOUR LIGHTS	109
EVIL MAY-DAY	126
COUNTRY WAYFARERS	136
PHILIP SIDNEY AND FULKE GREVILLE	162
SHAKSPERE'S FIRST RIDE TO LONDON	169
MAY-MORNING: ITS POETRY AND ITS PROSE	177
AMATEURS AND ACTORS	184
BEN JONSON'S MOTHER	194
ENGLISH POETS IN SCOTLAND	201
ROBERT BURTON'S POETICAL COMMONWEALTH	221
MILTON, THE LONDONER	233
LUCY HUTCHINSON	266
ASTROLOGICAL ALMANACS	275
MAY FAIR	283
JOHN AUBREY, AND HIS EMINENT MEN	296

ONCE UPON A TIME.

THE PASTONS.

I HAVE a great affection for the Pastons. They are the only people of the old time who have allowed me to know them thoroughly. I am intimate with all their domestic concerns—their wooings, their marriages, their household economies. I see them, as I see the people of my own day, fighting a never-ending battle for shillings and pence; spending lavishly at one time, and pinched painfully at another. I see them, too, carrying on their public relations after a fashion that is not wholly obsolete;—intriguing at elections, bribing and feasting. I see them, as becomes constitutional Englishmen, ever quarrelling by action and writ; and, what is not quite so common in these less adventurous times, employing “the holy law of pike and gun” to support the other law, or to resist. I see them, in their pride of family, despising trade and yet resting upon its assistance. I see the young ladies leading a somewhat unquiet and constrained life till they have become conformable in the matter of marriage;

and I see the young gentlemen taking a strict inventory of the amount of ready cash that is to be paid down with a bride, and deciding upon eligibility by this simple rule of the scales. This is all very edifying; and I am truly obliged to this gracious family, who, four hundred years ago, communicated with each other and with their friends, in the most frank manner, upon every subject of their varied lives.

The Paston Letters* carry us through three generations who lived during the turbulent period of the Wars of the Roses. The first generation makes us acquainted with Sir William Paston, a judge of the Common Pleas, and his wife Agnes. This is a wonderful woman. We see her, at the very opening of the correspondence, scheming for the marriage of her sons, and holding her daughters in terrible durance. The judge passes on to that assize where no more shall "*fur* sit on the bench and *latro* stand at the bar." But then comes on the scene, John Paston, his elder son; and he, for a quarter of a century, dwelling now in the Inner Temple and now in Norwich, is carrying on a fight about disputed titles to broad lands in Norfolk and Suffolk, whilst his wife Margaret is writing him little tender remembrances of her affection, or warning him against his enemies, or opening to the worldly man in London quiet glimpses of boys

* Original Letters written during the Reigns of Henry VI., Edward IV., and Richard III.; with Notes, by John Fenn, Esq. A new edition, by A. Ramsay, 2 vols., 1840.

wanting new clothes, and girls growing up to be troublesome in the fancy that a little love is necessary to their existence. The old grandmother Agnes is still busy amongst them. Then John Paston of the Inner Temple passes away, and his gallant son, Sir John Paston, comes upon the stage. He is of a gay and fearless nature, winning ladye's love at tournament or dance, but a very restless spirit who has some secret affection which interferes with his certain advancement if he would be prudent and marry after the court fashion. He has need of friends, but Sir John throws them away very recklessly; and so the great enemy of the House of Paston, the Duke of Norfolk, gets the upper hand, and beleaguers their castle of Caister with a thousand men, and takes hold of the fortress and its lands in a summary way, well known to the old barons and knights as "disseisin," and which the petty modern ages imperfectly copied when the landlord unroofed a cottage to eject his refractory tenant. This latter story of the Pastons is a great romance.

Margaret Paston, the mother, is the heroine of this "strange eventful history," after she became a widow in 1466. She is a person of prodigious energy, and she has need of it to cope with the difficulties by which she is surrounded. She is troubled by the course of politics as well as by that of law. Sir John, the gay soldier, however ready to better his fortune in the sunshine of court favour, is not very particular whether it be the

“sun of York” or of Lancaster. Her second son, also John, who is called John of Gelston, a curious specimen of the gallant of those days, who wears his new hat and looks out for a new love with equal indifference, cannot keep out of trouble when swords are flashing all around him. The story of the daughter Margery is a rare exception to the ordinary passages of gentle damsels in those times. It is a tale of true love. There is a younger son at Eton; and through him we learn a little of the school-life of the fifteenth century; and another at Oxford, who is destined for the church, but dies young. But whether we see the lady mother and her sons in the Norwich of friars and worsted-spinners, with now and then a noble or even a king glittering amongst the citizens—or at their castle of Caister, a moated fortress some two miles from Yarmouth, where there is a rude garrison ever looking out—we always see them under some aspect of danger and difficulty, and yet putting a brave face upon their perils, and keeping a great calm amidst their hopes. These poor Pastons had an unquiet time of it; and this gives a more than common interest to their annals—for their Letters *are* Annals—as trustworthy and as interesting as any records that have aspired to the dignity of History.

When Dame Margaret Paston was a fair young maiden, and John Paston came a-wooing, “she made him gentle cheer in gentle wise.” To the grave Sir William Paston, judge of the Common

Pleas, his wife Agnes writes thus of the "gentlewoman" whom John made "treaty" with, being in high good-humour at the coming alliance:—"The parson of Stockton told me if ye would buy her a gown, her mother would give thereto a goodly fur; the gown needeth for to be had, and of colour it would be a goodly blue, or else a bright sanguine." Silk gowns were not come at so cheaply in those days as now; and the judge of the Common Pleas might have taken time to pause before he committed himself to the Howell and James of Cheapside for fifteen yards of damask at seven shillings a yard. But surely Margaret Mauteby got her silk gown. It was, we have no doubt, the "bright sanguine." In 1443 she is a wife and mother; and her husband has been sick in the Inner Temple while she is in the country; and her heart is overflowing with tenderness; and she has sent four nobles to the four orders of friars at Norwich to pray for him; and she has vowed to go on pilgrimage to Walsingham; and she would rather have him at home "than a new gown, though it were of scarlet." Dear young Margaret! But Margaret, when a wife of twelve years, has a loving request to prefer to her husband: "I pray you that ye will do your cost on me against Whitsuntide, that I may have something for my neck. When the Queen was here I borrowed my cousin Elizabeth's Clere's device, for I durst not for shame go with my beads amongst so many fresh gentlewomen as here were at that time." Margaret

of Anjou was at Norwich in 1452, saying gracious things to the gentry—for Richard of York was in arms,—and she sent for Elizabeth Clere, and “made right much of her, and desired her to have an husband.” Yet Margaret Paston thinks of more substantial matters than neck-devices:—“Right worshipful husband,—I commend me to you; I pray you that ye will buy two dozen trenchers, for I can none get in this town” (Norwich). Yet with all her care the anxious wife cannot wholly please her absent husband, and she writes, “I recommend me to you, beseeching you that ye be not displeased with me, though my simpleness caused you to be displeased with me.” A few years onward and Margaret is imbued with the unquiet spirit of the times; and though she begs her husband to buy her a pound of sugar and a pound of almonds, and “some frieze to make of your children’s gowns,” she also desires he would get some cross-bows and windlasses and quarrels, “for your houses here be so low that there may none man shoot out with no long-bow, though we had never so much need.” At one time Margaret held the Manor-house of Heylesden against my Lord of Suffolk, with guns and ordnance. Just before that bold march upon London which gave the throne to Edward, and sent Henry to the Tower, there is a letter from Margaret Paston to her husband, “Written in haste, the second Sunday in Lent, by candlelight at even;” and she warns him to be “more wary of your guiding for your person’s

safeguard, and also that ye be not too hasty to come into this country till ye hear the world is more sure." What a world to live in! The poor "Bezonian" had to "speak or die" for a weak Henry or a profligate Edward. He had to fight for a doubtful inheritance, with cross-bow and quarrel; to make forcible entries, or hold possession, by writ and sword. His agent writes to him about a cause that "hath been called on as diligently and hastily this term as it might be, and alway days given them by the court to answer; and then they took small exceptions and trifled forth the courts; and alway excused them because the bill is long, and his counsel had no leisure to see it; and then prayed hearing of the testament of my master your father, and thereof made another matter, and argued it to put them from it, because they had emparled to it before; and then Hillingworth, to drive it over this term, alleged variance betwixt the bill and the testament, that John Damme was named in the testament Joh Damme." This was written in 1461, and we are even now, three hundred and ninety-two years later, only upon the threshold of law-reform. What millions have been spent by the people of England in paying, not for justice, but to "drive it over this term," since the variance between "John" and "Joh" was found out by the cunning lawyers in April, 1461. What jargon has been talked, from that day to this, about tenures, remainders, perpetuities, fines and recoveries, settlements, wills, uses, trusts,

leases, mortgages, possession, and all the infinite subtleties that have been given to us, as an especial blessing of Providence, to make the owners of property miserable, and to preserve something like an equality between the rich and the poor !

And so, what with writs of trespass, and suits of ejectment, John Paston became impoverished, and died suspected and heart broken, after confinement in the Fleet, in May, 1466. The aspects of the family in the third year of Margaret's widowhood may be shown in a slight Imaginary Scene, founded upon the letters.

It is the Wednesday before the feast of Easter, in the year 1469, in which year the great festival of the Church fell on the 2nd of April. In the dark twilight that preceded the rising of the paschal moon, a small cavalcade of jaded riders pass the little church of Caister Holy Trinity, of which there is nothing now remaining but a ruined tower. They had left Norwich at an early hour of the morning ; but although the distance they had to travel was less than twenty miles, the highway was then so rotten from the rains of the season, that the progress of these riders was painfully slow. Indeed the two footmen who walk by the side of the horse which bears their mistress, and carefully attend upon her bridle-rein, scarcely make so much exertion to maintain their speed as the weary beasts who constantly stumble amongst the deep

rets. The lady is somewhat more than of the middle age ; yet she rides with a firm seat, holds herself erect, and complains not of weariness, though she had tasted no food save a small manchet since she had partaken of the lenten white-herring at the breakfast time of seven. Behind the lady follows the somewhat impatient steed of a reverend priest, who, with submission be it said, does not endure the long fast quite so patiently as she of the weaker frame ; and whose restlessness communicates itself to his horse through the pricking of the spur and the snatching of the bit, which occasionally manifests that he who governs the quadruped requires a small portion of self-government to endure the evils of this laborious way-faring. The lady is the worshipful Mistress Margaret Paston, widow ; the priest is her chaplain, Sir James Gloys. Behind them come two led sumpter-mules, laden with panniers and other gear, but not having to stumble under a very heavy load. The hinds who drive them are themselves driven by an upper servant of the lady's house. The destination of the party is the fair castle of Caister. It is now a desolate place, whose halls have become ruinous farm-buildings, and whose moat is a miry pond. The weary travellers look up briskly when they see the great tower standing out in sharp relief in the twilight, rising high over the hill behind its turrets. The horses, who have pleasant recollections of stall and crib, press into a trot as they pass the church ; and making a short

turn, go cheerily along, till horse and foot halt at the gate of the avenue, which led to the draw-bridge of the western moat.

The gate is quickly opened by the footmen, who shout lustily, "Nicholas, Nicholas, down with bridge, our lady is come." But no Nicholas is at hand to answer; and indeed the shouting is somewhat unnecessary, for the bridge is already lowered, and the mother of the lord of Caister rides without challenge into the outer court of the goodly castle. No warder from its tower has given signal of her approach; no porter, armed to the teeth, is there to make a show of vigilance, if the reality were wanting. The dame is angered beyond measure; but she is silent. Again the footmen shout, "Nicholas," as they thunder with their staves against the ponderous western porch which led through a corridor to the inner court. Not a light is to be seen through window or loophole; but as the rising moon throws a glimmer upon the castle walls, a faint wreath is observed creeping up from the precincts of the kitchen, which tells that the place is not wholly deserted. The knockings are again repeated by the impatient grooms, who, despite the presence of the lady and the priest, are not sparing of oaths, which, although peculiar to the period, and as such of grave interest to resolute antiquaries, are scarcely needful to be set down by us, who aim at no profundity in our archæological gleanings. At length a lamp glimmers through a side slit in the great tower; and the yeoman of the

buttery, who has charge of the sumpter-mules, advances, and with a double oath demands admission. The owner of the voice within gives no mark to a possible enemy without; but shouts securely below the loop-hole, "Mant come in, bor." For an instant Mistress Margaret Paston feels the discomfort, and almost shame, of this exclusion from the shelter of her son's castle—the possession which the Pastons were ready to defend to the extremest issue against those who denied their right to its quiet keeping. She even thinks for a moment that Caister had been forcibly wrested from their hands; that their enemies are within its walls. But a second thought assures her that this could not have happened; for in that case a better watch would have been kept. Her own knaves had been faithless to their trust. Advancing, with the spirit that becomes her station, beneath the tower—the priest, however, wisely remaining with the grooms in the apprehension of some foe in ambush—the Paston cries out, with a voice of authority, "Who are you, varlet, that deny your mistress entrance? Come down and unbar door, or you shall keep your Easter in a lower chamber than you now hide in." Again the voice shouts, "Mant come in, bor." The lady is incensed; the priest is cold and hungry; the yeoman of the buttery and the footmen are furious, for they had an undoubting trust that there was supper in the larder, and a fervent hope that there was wine in the cellar. The point is to find an entrance. They forthwith begin to

shout for Peryn Sale, John Chapman, and Robert Jackson, men-at-arms that they thought were within the walls; but no answer comes. Nor is the cry more fortunate for Robert Jackson, John Chapman, and Peryn Sale. In whatever way the demand is varied there comes the one answer from the one voice, "Mant come in, bor." The lady chafes and mutters, "Oh, that Daubeney were here to have a rule!" She suddenly bethinks her of William Penny, a soldier of Calais, lately sent to the keeping of Caister, of whom her son, Sir John Paston, had written a remarkable eulogy, purporting that he was bald, and as good a man as goeth upon the earth, saving a little—which little was that he was apt to get a little drunk. So "William Penny" is forthwith shouted, and the courts of Caister echo "William Penny." It is all in vain. Some one thinks of John Thresher, to call upon in their need; and at length a voice is heard within—"Up, James Hallman—stand to your tackling—they are over the moat; up, you drunken varlet; up, Rawlings; bills, bills, lights, lights." The shoutings within the portal are answered by another faint shouting from an inner chamber; and now a Babel of sounds is rising in the distance, and the voice of the chief in command, William Penny the soldier of Calais, might be heard above the general uproar—"Harrow, harrow! loselly gadlings!—bacinets, halberts!" And then this great leader, rubbing his eyes, solemnly says—"Here's lachesse. Know ye not that it is

written in the Ordinances for War, that every man be obeysant to his captain, to keep his watch and ward, and to do all that longeth a soldier to do? Muster! mountee! havock!" Fearful as these "escries" are, the garrison seem not inclined for a sortie; nor, indeed, would any such inclination have availed them much, for the gates of Caister are all locked upon them. Yet those without are not wholly free from peril; and several draw close under the dark shade of a buttress, for a quarrel from a loop-hole might have closed a weary journey with unnecessary awkwardness for some one. A sudden relief lights upon them in the form of Nicholas the porter, who, all unconscious of the presence in which he is about to stand, comes singing up to the drawbridge, with a basket on his shoulder and a keg slung to his side. The yeoman of the buttery, his old and faithful friend, advances to meet him, as he stands irresolutely on the bridge, seeing unexpected company. "Oh, Nicholas, Nicholas," ejaculates the afflicted yeoman, "what could lead you to desert your post?"

"Hunger," stoutly answers Nicholas. "Hunger, what has made many a bold man run afore now."

"Hunger!" interposes Dame Margaret; "who presumes to talk of hunger in Sir John Paston's castle of Caister? Nicholas, Nicholas, if you had not been porter of old to Sir John Fastolf, of blessed memory ("Whom God assoil," said the priest), I would discharge you on the spot. Let no one talk of hunger in this fair castle, as an excuse for the

neglect of duty. No parley here, varlet, but give us entrance."

"No parley here, varlet," echoes the priest.

The unhappy porter lays down his load, and selects the largest of the keys from the bunch at his girdle. The great door creaks on its hinges; and as it gives admission to the angry visitors of the inhospitable castle, half a dozen men, who had slept on in spite of the tumult, start up from their nap on the benches of the corridor, and with one voice exclaim, "Nicholas, have you got the herrings?"

Hunger, cold, weariness, offended dignity—all these are forgotten by the mother of the Pastons till she has provided for the security of their stronghold. During this tedious waiting she has refused to dismount from her horse; and now, riding even within the porch, she shouts with a voice of captainship for the delinquent leader of the men-at-arms, "William Penny, come forth." The spirit of soldiery drives out the spirit of drink; and in a moment William Penny snatches a partisan, and, lowering the point in gracious salutation, awaits the lady's commands. "William Penny, gather your men, and up with the drawbridge." The comrades have the word from their corporal and the feat is done. Again the point of lance is lowered, and again the lady commands—"William Penny, muster your men in the great hall." The tramp of heavy shoon proclaims that they are finding their way from the portal across the inner court. The

lady now dismounts from her steed ; the porter and the cook have taken charge of the panniers ; a torch is held by the trembling urchin who had shouted "Mant come in, bor," and who now keeps muttering, "M' uncle bod me." With the dignity of a queen, Mistress Margaret slowly paces into the hall, where William Penny and his men, with pike and crossbow stand in serried file in the bright moonlight which gleams through the traceried windows. Sir James Gloys follows in amaze, not clearly seeing the resources for supper ; and still more amazed is he when the lady passes through the hall to the great staircase, saying, "Gentlemen-at-arms, to your quarters ; Sir James, give you good night."

The visits which Mistress Margaret Paston made to her son's castle of Caister were not frequent ; and to her they were not pleasant visits. The fair inheritance which the Pastons had obtained, under the will of Sir John Fastolf, was a doubtful blessing. Its tenure was exceedingly precarious. Claimants to this great property—"a rich jewel at need for all the country in time of war"—were there more than one ; and they were each ready to take by the power of the strong arm what the law forbade them to take by any other power than the parchment missiles of the courts. The castle had within it few domestics ; but their absence did not render the place lonely ; for whenever a soldier, English or foreign, who was ready to fight for any cause, could be hired, Sir John Paston gave him

an introduction to the spacious courts of Caister. Small inquiry was there as to the moral qualities of these hirelings. There were few moveables left in Caister to excite their cupidity ; there was scarcely anything to guard but the bare walls. Sometimes John Paston, the brother of Sir John (whom we shall call, to avoid confusion, by his familiar name of John of Gelston), would take the government of these ill-disciplined forces ; and as he was a bold and skilful soldier, well informed in the warlike science of his day, John of Gelston ruled these knaves with a steady hand. Sometimes John Daubeney, a trusty friend of the house, held the rule ; and then also some order was preserved. In the absence of these authorities, Mistress Margaret Paston occasionally took upon her the very difficult task of governing this irregular household. She was a wise and a high-minded matron in many things ; but this duty was something beyond her capacity, even in her own opinion ; and she frankly confessed, " I cannot well guide nor rule soldiers, and also they set not by a woman as they should set by a man." But, whoever was the commander at Caister, there was one thing essential to the rule of that small community, which is equally essential to the quiet government of the largest communities,—that the people should be fed. Now it unfortunately happened that the day which we have recorded, on which Dame Paston and her chaplain took their way from her comfortable dowry house at Norwich to her son's somewhat

cheerless Castle of Caister, for the purpose of distributing Maunday on the following morning to the poor and afflicted, as became the lady of a great house—this day was marked at Caister by the absence even of “a lenten entertainment.” In most great houses of that time, and, indeed, to a later period even, in houses of earls who lived in almost kingly state, the domestics were accustomed to what were called Scrambling Days of Lent, which Bishop Percy has interpreted as “Days when no regular meals were provided, but every one shifted and scrambled for himself as well as he could.” But in the Caister household, under the rule of the Pastons, the scrambling days were not confined to this especial season, but prevailed with little interruption throughout the year. This arrangement was not the result of any philosophical theory, such as might be derived from a logical induction that as fasting was undoubtedly good at one season, it might be equally good at all seasons; but from certain necessities which pressed heavily upon a family that, in times when private as well as public affairs were greatly disordered, had more lands than rents, and desiring many things in exchange, had not means always at hand for conducting the exchange upon principles that could alone satisfy the traders of Yarmouth and Norwich, upon whose stores the household at Caister had a somewhat precarious dependence. It happened that at this season of Lent, in the ninth year of King Edward IV., Sir John Paston had reckoned some-

what too strongly upon the powers of abstinence which were possessed by his followers at Caister ; and thus it also fell out that on the day when the good Mistress Margaret arrived at the fair but ill-victualled castle of her son, there was a mutiny in the garrison, which could scarcely be considered an offence, for in truth the meal was exhausted, and so was the stock-fish ; mutton was there none in the fold, nor beef in the salting-tub. The beer-barrel, however, was not quite empty ; and to that and to sleep had the honest guardians of Caister addressed themselves with the utmost eagerness at the time of even-song, to find some compensation for their morning, noon, and afternoon privations. They were angry ; they were rebellious. But they had the military virtue even in their sufferings—they would not leave the post they were hired to defend. Thus it was that when good old Nicholas the porter, having shared his last loaf with the men-at-arms, had given over expecting his mistress as the night drew on (he did not reckon upon the unusually bad roads), he started off for the village of East Caister, where he trusted some kind Christian might succour him with a few loaves and a keg of herrings. In making this sally he turned key upon his companions ; for the beer, although not of the strongest, had deranged their brains, weak from inanition. And so the drawbridge was down, and the portal shut, when Mistress Margaret Paston came to the castle.

The feelings of the widow of John Paston, first

inheritor of Caister, under this unlucky combination of circumstances, were intensely painful. She seemed degraded in the eyes of her own proper household, who lived in comparative comfort in her dower house in Norwich. Her establishment there was simple and orderly. She had no band of military retainers to govern ; she had no apprehensions of violence by day or stratagem by night. Caister was to her a perpetual anxiety. For seven years her unhappy husband had struggled to maintain his claims against the most powerful noble of the day, and even against the cupidity of the crown itself. His wife had been left in the dismantled chambers of the fair castle, whilst he was pursuing the court of Edward IV. with his petitions ; and the court answered by throwing him into prison as a suspected traitor. He died, without a friend to close his eyes, in a London inn. His family impoverished themselves still more, to bestow on the first heir of Caister a most sumptuous funeral. Three years had John Paston slept soundly under the floor of Broomholm Priory, but the possession of his castle was not one jot more secure to his son, although he had been honoured by the king, and could say with Falconbridge—

“ Well, now can I make any Joan a lady.”

Mistress Margaret felt degraded as she entered the castle without provender for its defenders. She remembered the days, happier days for her, when old Fastolf dwelt in all splendour and liberal

hospitality in this, the castellated house which he had built at enormous expense. She had feasted in the Great Hall, in the bright summer season, when the gold flagons, and chargers, and standing cups, and salt-cellars, glistened in the sunny rays that came into that spacious room, through the windows rich with heraldic crimson and purple, where the columbine flower and the antelope, the badges of the house of Lancaster, shone amidst the *or* and *azure* of the Fastolf quarterings. She had sat, in the days of quiet domestic occupation, in the Winter Hall, when the bright wood-fire blazed amidst the andirons, and the cloth of arras with which the walls were hung, representing all the gambols of the morris-dance, brought the thoughts of May into the gloom of December. She had knelt in the chapel, where golden candlesticks and chalices, and images of St. Michael and our Lady, sometimes appeared to have more associations with worldly pride than heavenly humility. She had slept in the Great Chamber, and the White Chamber, and the Stranger's Chamber, all made luxurious with feather-beds, and pillows of down, and coverings of arras, and cushions of silk. In those days the buttery was stored with its "great and huge bottles," its tankards and its quartlets, its napery and its trencher-knives; and the kitchen was abundantly provided with its brass pots, its pike-pans, its ladles and skimmers, its spits, its dropping-pans, and its frying-pans. Now Mistress Margaret Paston looked upon bare walls, whether

in hall or chamber, in chapel or kitchen. The plate was gone, the tapestry was gone; the feather-beds and the pillows had given place to hard straw-mattresses; the kitchen could boast only a cauldron, a frying-pan, and a spit; the buttery had no flagons of silver, though it maintained a show of conviviality in the display of six black jacks; the cellars were empty, save that a cask or two of hard and sour ale was absolutely necessary to prevent the men-at-arms altogether deserting their dreary post. Mistress Margaret knew something of all this; but she had not been to Caister for several months, and she little expected that the allies which Sir John had sent down—"the gentlemanly comfortable fellows," who had arrived in the preceding November—would have made such havoc with the white herring and the baconed herring, the salted chins and the Dutch cheeses.

Mistress Paston represses her anger, for she justly considers that honest Nicholas, who had kept the gate in the old days of abundance, when he had ale and beef without asking, to his heart's content, had scant blame for seeking in his own extremity, and to satisfy the clamour of his noisy fellow sufferers, a supply of something to keep life and soul together in these long-continued scrambling days. Her sorrow, however, she could not suppress. To conceal it from those around her, she retires to the small and somewhat bare chamber which she reserved to her own use when sojourning at Caister. But before she seeks to bury her anxieties in sleep,

she sends for her yeoman of the buttery, he who had attended on the sumpter-mules from Norwich, and, like a discreet lady as she is, affects to regret the somewhat too earnest piety of Sir John Paston, in compelling his merry men to keep such an over-strict Lent. That should be at once amended. What did the panniers contain that he had brought from Norwich for the morrow's Maunday? The careful man set forth that, humbly presuming her ladyship's age to be forty-six, he had brought forty-six manchets of the finest bread for the alms on the morrow, and in the same way he had brought sufficient salted meat to cut into forty-six portions, each poor person receiving the same upon a treen platter. The lady proclaims that it is well; but it has occurred to her that as this was her son's household, and not her own, it would be more fitting if the almesse were regulated by her son's age, and not by hers; and so she directs that twenty-eight treen platters, with twenty-eight portions of bread and meat, should be distributed on the morrow, instead of the forty-six which had been provided. "And so," says the lady with a merry voice, "let Sir James Gloys bless the remaining meat and manchets for this evening's supper, and let Nicholas keep his herrings for the morrow's breakfast. And, good William, ask Nicholas's wife to come here and be my chamberer, and let her bring me a slice of manchet, for I am somewhat weary, with a cup of red wine of which you brought a pitcher or two for Sir James."

.

Mistress Margaret Paston descends from her solitary chamber, with a heavy heart, on the Maunday Thursday whose eve saw her son's retainers wanting a supper had a lucky device not suggested itself to her inventive mind. She comes into the Winter Hall, the somewhat snug room which, opening into the inner court, is sheltered from the keen east winds that blow from the neighbouring sea. The morning is raw and comfortless. She looks upon the bare walls, and thinks of the cloth of arras of the morris-dance with which they were wont to be lined. She sits down upon the hard bench, and the remembrance of the great fringed chairs that once combined all the requisites of state and comfort are present to her memory. She gazes upon the wide chimney, and recollects the polished andirons richly ornamented (it may be) with

"Two winking Cupids
Of silver, each on one foot standing ;"

and she sighs when she sees, as she had often seen before, that they are supplanted by two coarse uprights of undecorated and rusty iron. These are small matters, but they tell a tale. The real present evil is, that there is no fire on the hearth, and no attendant appears to procure one. She sits down and muses. Early rising is not a custom now in the household of Caister ; for it has been found by experience that sleep is an abater of those cravings of the inner man which are most imperative in exercise and action. At length the wife of

Nicholas appears ; and as fuel is not so scarce as salt-beef, humbly suggests that her ladyship would be the better of a fire. Her ladyship assents. In due time her own yeoman of the buttery presents himself with two of the portions of meat and manchet which he has rescued from the eighteen that had been somewhat hastily dedicated to secular uses. A napery is laid over the rough oak table, and Sir James Gloys is duly informed that breakfast is ready. A leathern bottle, or black jack, of sour ale graces one end of the board ; fortunate is it that something remains of a pitcher of red wine, which stands invitingly at the other.

Sir James Gloys, after a short matins, sits down to his frugal meal in a state of great abstraction. We are not exactly sure that his meditations are heavenward ; for, in truth, he has been considerably discomposed by the events of the preceding evening, and by the prospects which he sees before him of little difference between the fasts of Lent and the feasts of Easter while he remains at Caister.

After an expressive silence, which in some degree reveals the struggle of pride which is passing in the breast of one, and of half-blighted hopes in that of the other, Sir James at length finds relief in the observation that the court is fast filling with the poor people who are come, according to annual custom, to claim the Maunday. Nicholas, the porter, knows by experience that the drawbridge should be lowered on this occasion ; that there would be almsgiving in the hall and prayers in the

chapel. He has seen, too, the chaplains of his old master assist him in washing the feet of the poor in all humility ; and so, being the chief in command of the household, he reverently enters to inquire whether his mistress, as the season was very cold, would not prefer that the water with which the ceremony would be performed should be temperately heated. The lady refers the question to the priest.

"With all reverence, worshipful lady," says the chaplain, "I humbly submit that this obsolete portion of the ceremonial may be dispensed with altogether."

"Obsolete, Sir James? How can you call it obsolete, when kings and queens are even at this hour preparing to imitate the humility of our Divine Master, with archbishops and bishops to assist them?" replies the lady.

"And for that especial reason I hold it right that we, of less degree, should in all humility not presume so closely to imitate the example of those whom the Lord hath set on high," responds the priest.

"We have little to give these poor people," sighs out the lady, "except the kindness and Christian love that are manifested in this act, which acknowledges all who bear God's image to be our fellows."

"The more necessity, I opine, for omitting that part of the day's business which has no substantial blessing in it. There will be scant thanks for

courtesies and humilities, when the hand is sent empty away," concludes Sir James.

The reverend chaplain is one of those persons with whom the world has been always filled, who hold that there is no charity but in almsgiving, and who, indeed, consider that the word charity has no other signification. Mistress Margaret knows that there is an authority which does not exactly support the opinions of the priest:—"If I depart all my goods into meats of poor men, and I have not charity, it profiteth to me nothing. Charity is patient, it is benign."* If the halls of Caister had been filled with abundance to feed a multitude, and if the lady and her chaplain had heaped up the baskets of every comer, and there ended, something would have been still wanting to have given happiness to those who were assembled in the great court on this Maunday Thursday. The Lady has not abundance, but she has a spirit of love in her bosom, sometimes smothered, but the more ready to come forth now at a time when she is not happy, and feels more humbly than is her wont; and so she says that if the poor go unfed from the household, they should not go unblest. She proceeds to the court, and thus addresses them in a tone of real kindness.

"Friends and neighbours!—I am come amongst you unprovided with the usual means of discharging one portion of the Christian duty which has been common in this house on this day. Before Sir

* Wiclif's Translation of the New Testament.

John Fastolf died, at the reverend age of eighty, he distributed his Maunday to an increasing number with his increasing years. When my husband came into possession of this house, we each distributed Maunday according to our several ages, so that the poor were not worse off than before. When he died, you were reduced to the widow's mite, for my son left me here to be his housekeeper. I am no longer equal to that duty. I dwell not among you. According to the custom of ancient time, the Maunday must be as the years of the age of the lord of the household. I grieve that some of you will return to your homes disappointed. But let us not part as if there was wrong to be remembered. Let us meet together and offer up our prayers together, that God will bless and preserve all his children, and give them according to their several necessities. Sir James, we follow you to the chapel."

There is disappointment, but it is only for a moment, for when did the words of sincerity and kindness ever fail, if addressed to an assembled multitude not stirred by passion or rendered sullen by real or fancied contempt? Men, women, and children follow the lady and her chaplain to the sacred place; and there prayer and thanksgiving are offered; and there, with many a passing word of considerate inquiry, of comfort to those who are afflicted, of sympathy with those who bear their lot in cheerfulness, does the matron kneel at the feet of the old and the young, and discharge her

office patiently and gracefully, so as to draw down many a tear and many a blessing. Had her hand-maidens performed the duty alone, the form of sanctimoniousness might have been present; but where would have been the spirit that unites the great and the humble in a reverent love before Him who knows no distinctions?

Thus, then, is this castle of Caister a very troublesome possession to the widow and her sons. It is the autumn of this same year 1469, and Margaret writes to Sir John, "Your brother and his fellowship stand in great jeopardy at Caister, and lack victuals, and Daubeney and Berney be dead, and divers others greatly hurt; and they fail gunpowder and arrows, and the place is sore broken with guns of the other party." And she calls upon Sir John to give them hasty help. But what can Sir John do? There is nothing to be accomplished without money and gunpowder; and the knight has his own necessities: "Mother, I beseech you send me some money, for by my troth I have but ten shillings; I wot not where to have more; and moreover I have been ten times in like case, or worse, within this ten weeks." What can the brave mother do in these straits? "Item, as for money I could get but ten pounds upon pledges, and that is spent upon your matters here, for paying of your men that were at Caister, and other things; and I wot not where to get none, neither *for surety nor* for pledges; and as for mine own

livelihood, I am so simply paid thereof that I fear me I shall be fain to borrow for myself, or else to break up household, or both." Yet the good Margaret keeps a great heart amidst these troubles, and counsels her son most righteously: "God visiteth you as it pleases Him in sundry wises: He would ye should know Him and serve Him better than ye have done before this time, and then He will send you more grace to do well in all other things; and for God's love remember it right well, and take it patiently, and thank God of his visitation; and if any thing have been amiss, any otherwise than it ought to have been before this, either in pride or in lavish expenses, or in any other thing that have offended God, amend it, and pray Him of His grace and help, and intend well to God and to your neighbours." Is not this a noble woman? It is in adversity that such natures are matured. She has had a hard life-struggle since old Sir William gave her that silk gown thirty years ago; but there is no weeping and wringing of hands with her. She has her work to do,—and she does it, though sometimes in a stern way, with slight pity for human infirmities. Evidently her belief is that "to be weak is miserable, doing or suffering." Let us look upon her under another aspect—the severe mother, exhibiting the harshness of the domestic relations between parent and child, yet in her secret heart most loving. This is a Shadow of a Reality.

Young Margery Paston is sitting in the accustomed solitude of the Brown Chamber in her mother's dowry house at Norwich. The chaplain, Sir James Gloys, has intercepted a letter addressed to Margery. The young lady is the object of constant anxiety and suspicion—watched—persecuted. Up to the age of twelve or fourteen she had seen little of her parents, but had been a welcome inmate in the family of Sir John Fastolf, at Caister; who, in his caresses of the fair girl, indulged the strong affection which old men generally feel towards a playful and endearing child. He had no children of his own, and little Margery was therefore a real solace to the ancient warrior. There was another child, a few years older than Margery, who was admitted to play, and to learn out of the same book, with the daughter of the Pastons. This was Richard Calle, the only son of an honest and painstaking man, who acted in the capacity of a steward for Sir John Fastolf, and conducted many of the complicated affairs with which the old knight amused himself in the evening of a busy life—his friends complaining of “the yearly great damage he beareth in disbursing his money about shipping and boats, keeping a house up at Yarmouth to his great harm, and receiveth but chaffer and ware for his corns and his wools, and then must abide a long day to make money.”

Richard Calle has now grown into manhood. He is reputed to have received a goodly inheritance from his father, which he has increased by provident

enterprises in trade. When the Pastons wanted money, he was once always to be applied to. But he has presumed to address his playfellow Margery with the language of affection; and though Sir John Paston had once said that, for his part, Richard Calle might have his dowerless sister and welcome, for he had always been a warm friend of the Pastons, his mother is indignant that a trader should presume to think of marrying into a gentle family; and John of Gelston, the second son, in an hour when the fortunes of the house seemed in the ascendant, has vowed that Richard Calle "should never have my good-will for to make my sister to sell candles and mustard at Framlingham."

Margery Paston sits in the Brown Chamber, with her bright blue eyes dimmed with tears. She is endeavouring to forget her own sorrows by reading a tale of imaginary griefs, which for four hundred years has never been read with a tearless eye. She is at that passage of 'The Clerk's Tale' of Chaucer, where Grisildis has her infant daughter taken from her, under pretence that it is to be put to death:—

" But, at the last, to spoken she began,
And meekely she to the serjeant pray'd
(So as he was a worthy gentleman)
That she might kiss her child ere that it doid [died];
And in her barne [lap] this little child she laid
With full sad face, and 'gan the child to bliss,
And lulled it, and after 'gan it kiss."

The door of the chamber is hastily opened, and an old servant stands before Margery with a face

of affright. All in that household love the gentle maiden ; and so the old man, seeing the tear in her eye, bids her be of good cheer, for though his worshipful mistress is now in a somewhat impatient humour, and demands her instant attendance in the Oaken Parlour, she is a good lady at heart, and would soon forgive any slight cause of offence.

Dame Paston has called in two allies to constitute, with herself, the tribunal that is about to sit in judgment on Margery Paston. Dame Agnes Paston, the aged mother of the late heir of Caister, sits at the table with her daughter-in-law and the priest.

Margery enters ; and, in a moment, is kneeling at the feet of her mother, with the accustomed reverence of child to parent. " Oh, minion," says the mother, " rise, I beseech you ; it is not for such as you to kneel to a poor forlorn widow, left with few worldly goods. Mistress Calle has plenteousness all around her, and has nothing to ask of the world's gear. She has her good house at Framlingham, and her full store at Norwich. Mistress, know you the price of salted hams at this present ? Are pickled herrings plenteous ? We have some wool in loft, which we should not be unwilling to exchange for worsteds. How say you, Mistress Dry-goods ; will you deal, will you chaffer ? "

" My mother, what mean you ? "

" Oh, minion, you know full well my meaning.

You are an alien from your family. You are betrothed to a low trader, with no gentle blood in his veins."

"The good Sir William Paston, Knight, and whilom Judge of His Majesty's Court of the Common Pleas, would rise from his grave to save a grand-daughter of his from intermarrying with mustard and candle," quoth the ancient lady. "Faugh! a factor!"

"And one whom I shrewdly suspect to be a heretic," says the priest, looking earnestly at Mistress Margaret Paston.

"Oh, my mother, why am I thus persecuted?"

"Persecuted, forsooth!" responds the elder dame; "I took other rule with my daughters; and well do I remember that when Elizabeth Clere, my niece, tried to intercede with me for her wilful cousin Mary, forasmuch as she had been 'beaten once in the week or twice, and sometimes twice in a day, and had her head broke in several places,' I told her that it was for warning and ensample to all forward maidens who dared to think of love or marriage without their parents' guidance. And with the help of my worthy lord, the good Sir William Paston, Knight, and Judge of His Majesty's Court of the Common Pleas—His Majesty Henry the Sixth gave him two robes and a hundred marks yearly; and may God him preserve upon his throne —"

The priest and Mistress Margaret drown the good old lady's somewhat disloyal gratitude (seeing

that the House of York is in the ascendant) by judicious clearings of the voice, as they prepare to read the intercepted letter of Richard Calle, with sundry glosses.

“Minion,” says the mother, “know you this superscription?”

“It is a letter from my own Richard,” cries the delighted girl; “will you give it me?”

“Assuredly not. It convicts you of being a false liar,—or it lies itself. Did you not, with the fear of close custody, and bread and water, and may be some healing stripes, before your eyes, affirm that there was no contract between the dry-goodsman and yourself?”

“Mother, I own my sin; I did affirm it, but I was wrong, and I am penitent.”

“Vile brethel!” exclaims the mother.

“She mentioned it not, even under the seal of confession,” adds the priest.

“Yes, once in the week or twice, and sometimes twice a day, and she made an excellent wife, by reason of the frequent beatings, and brought up her children accordant,” soliloquises the old lady.

“Daughter, I conjure you to hear what this vile Richard Calle sayeth to you. Tell me that it is false—tell me that he is a bold liar, when he affirmeth that you are contracted, and you shall at once have all freedom and reasonable pleasure; but if not——”

“Mother, I listen.”

"Hear, then, what this abominable bill imports. Sir James, please to read."

"To Mistress Margery Paston :

"Mine own lady and mistress, and before God very true wife, I, with heart full, very sorrowfully recommend me unto you, as he that cannot be merry, nor nought shall be, till it be otherwise with us than it is yet ; for this life that we lead now is neither pleasure to God nor to the world, considering the great band of matrimony that is made betwixt us, and also the great love that hath been, and as I trust yet is, betwixt us, and as on my part never greater. Wherefore I beseech Almighty God comfort us as soon as it pleaseth Him ; for us that ought of very right to be most together, are most asunder. Meseemeth it is a thousand years ago that I spake with you——"

Margery here bursts into a passion of tears ; and her mother, almost weeping too, ejaculates, "My poor child !" The priest looks at the lady somewhat spitefully, and proceeds :—

"I had liever than all the good in the world I might be with you. Alas ! alas ! good lady, full little remember they what they do that keep us thus asunder. Four times in the year are they accursed that let matrimony——'"

"Accursed, are they !" exclaims the priest. "Ban and anathema against us, my worshipful lady ! But there are others, I wot, that the Church holds accursed ; and this base mechanical be one of them, if I mistake not. Did I not once hear him

say—for the varlet ever had privilege to speak in this house, when his betters held their peace—did I not hear him once say that his father had told him that he had seen the heretic priest, John Waddon, burnt at Framlingham, and that he (shame that such an unbeliever might presume to speak upon matters of the Church!) thought that the knowledge of the truth was not advanced by such terrors, and that those who lit the fires for the Lollards had no sanction in the Gospel of Christ. For mine own part, I well believe that he has seduced our daughter from her obedience by his false and damnable opinions. Mistress Margery, did he never open in your presence the book of that arch heretic, John Wiclif, which is called ‘The Book of the New Law’—the book which, in the Constitution of Archbishop Arundel, was forbidden to be read, under pain of the greater excommunication!”

The maiden answers not. The priest, looking earnestly at Mistress Margaret Paston, asks her if *she* did not think that there was a possibility of such a devilish corruption having gone forward; and Mistress Margaret, her cheek colouring a deep red, and then having an ashy paleness, speaks no more for good or evil to her daughter, but quails before the priest. He has her secret. There is a treasured volume in that house, which has been carefully locked up for half a century, to be looked upon in the secret hour, when prying eyes are sleeping, and in the hour of tribulation, when careful eyes are waking. With Richard Calle, Mistress

Margaret had often spoken of this book ; although even to possess it was to risk a charge of "Lollardie," with all its penalties. The priest sees his triumph ; and proceeds to make an end of as much of the letter as he chooses to read :—

" 'I understand, lady, ye have had as much sorrow for me as any gentlewoman hath had in the world, as would God all that sorrow that ye have had, had rested upon me, and that ye had been discharged of it ; for I wis, lady, it is to me a death to hear that ye be entreated otherwise than ye ought to be ; this is a painful life that we lead. I cannot live thus without it be a great displeasure to God.' "

"He thought not of God's displeasure when he presumed to speak of love to a daughter of the Pastons," says the priest. "A granddaughter of Sir William Paston, one of his Majesty's Justices," mutters the ancient lady. Sir James continues to read the missive :—

" 'I suppose they deem we be not ensured together, and if they do so I marvel, for then they are not well advised, remembering the plainness that I brake to my mistress at the beginning, and I suppose by you, both ; and ye did as ye ought to do of very right ; and if ye have done the contrary, as I have been informed ye have done, ye did neither consciencely, nor to the pleasure of God, without ye did it for fear, and for the time, to please such as were at that time about you ; and if ye did it for this cause, it was a reasonable cause,

considering the great and importable calling upon ye that ye had ; and many an untrue tale was made to you of me, which, God know it, I was never guilty of.' ”*

“And now, pretty Mistress Margery,” says Sir James, “will you affirm that this man sayeth untruly, when he sayeth that you are ensured together ? You have before said that you are not so ensured. Will you cast off your mother and your brothers to be the wife of a low factor, and a companion for idle queans and the wives of fat burgesses, instead of wedding some noble knight, who will give you a castle to dwell in, with all worship and authority ? Deny the contract ; there is guilt in affirming it, even if it had been made in a moment of imprudence.”

“Sir James Gloys, and you, my honoured mother,” answers the maiden, “Richard Calle says truly, that I did not consciencely, nor to the pleasure of God, when I concealed our contract for fear, and for the time. We are betrothed ; and I rejoice in the handfasting. No pain, no fear, shall ever again lead me to deny it. He is my true husband, and may I ever be to him a reverent and loving wife. For who can I love as I have loved, and do love, Richard Calle,—the companion of my childhood, the instructor of my girlhood ; a true man, as brave as if he were the sturdiest of belted knights—as wise as if he were the clerkliest of

* This and the preceding passages are given literally from Calle's letter in the Paston Collection.

learned scholars. He has abundance ; he is generous. When did a Paston ask Richard Calle for aid that his hand was not open ? We may not want his help just now ; but if the time arrive, and assuredly it may be not far off, that hand would be again stretched out for succour. Come Richard Calle of gentle or simple, I heed not ; he is my own true man, and to him is my faith plighted, for ever and aye."

"Twice in a day, and had her head broke in several places," grumbles the ancient dame.

"Mistress Margery," responds the priest, "you must take your own course. But this is not now a matter for daughter and mother to settle between them. It must before the Lord Bishop. In the name of Holy Church, I prohibit all intercourse by message or letter between Richard Calle and yourself. You must be in strict durance for a short season ; and then a higher than us shall decide, contract or no contract. Heaven forfend that I, or any servant of the altar, should let matrimony."

"My child, go to your chamber," whispers the subdued mother.

The Michaelmas of 1469 is nearly come. Margery Paston is still in durance at her mother's house. Every art has been tried to make her deny the betrothal. The priest has worked upon the fears of the mother—the daughter has been studiously kept from her presence. But this state of things cannot abide. Dame Margaret thus writes to Sir John

Paston : "I greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine ; letting you weet that on Thursday last was, my mother and I were with my Lord of Norwich, and desired him that he would no more do in the matter touching your sister till that ye, and my brother, and others, that were executors to your father, might be here together, for they had the rule of her as well as I ; and he said plainly that he had been required so often to examine her, that he might not, nor would, no longer delay it ; and charged me, in pain of cursing, that she should not be deferred, but that she should appear before him the next day. And I said plainly that I would neither bring her nor send her. And then he said that he would send for her himself, and charged that she should be at her liberty to come when he sent for her."

On the next day—it is a Friday—Margery Paston is brought into the Bishop's Court. There, surrounded with the panoply of the Church, sits old Walter Lyhart—he that built the roof of the nave, and the screen, of Norwich Cathedral. The maiden trembles, but her spirit remains unbroken. The bishop puts her in remembrance how she was born,—what kin and friends she has—"And ye shall have more, young lady, if ye will be ruled and guided after them. But if ye will not, what rebuke, and loss, and shame will be yours ? They will evermore forsake you, for any good, or help, or comfort that ye shall have of them. Be well advised. I have heard say that ye love one

that your friends are not well pleased that ye should love. Be advised—be right well advised.”

“I am the betrothed wife of Richard Calle. I must cleave to him for better for worse.”

“Rehearse to me what you said to him. Let me understand if it makes matrimony?”

“We have plighted our troth—we are handfasted. How can I repeat the words? Richard said—Oh, my lord! spare me. I am bound in my conscience, whatsoever the words were. If the very words make not sure, make it, I beseech you, surer ere I go hence.”

And then the bishop dismisses the maiden with many frowns.

Richard Calle is summoned. He briefly tells the time and place where the vows were exchanged. The bishop is bewildered. He scarcely dare hesitate to confirm the marriage. But the subtle priest is at his side, and he whispers the fearful word of “Lollardie.” Then the bishop hastily breaks up the court, and says, “That he supposed there should be found other things against him that might cause the letting the marriage; and therefore he would not be too hasty to give sentence.”

Margery Paston stands again upon her mother’s threshold. The aged servant is weeping as he opens the door: “Oh, my dear young mistress! I am commanded to shut this gate against you.” The figure of Sir James Gloys looms darkly in the hall. “Begone, mistress!” he exclaims. “I will go to my grandmother,” sobs out the poor girl.

"Your grandmother banishes you for ever from her presence," retorts the churlish priest.

It is night. The pride and the purity of the unhappy Margery forbid her to seek the protection of her Richard. She has been watched. Exhausted and heart-broken, she gladly accepts the shelter which Roger Best offers her. That shelter becomes her prison.

Here closes the record. But what a succession of Shadows is called up by the endorsement of the letter which tells of these sorrows: "*They were after married together.*" The contract could not be dissolved.

The Pastons can struggle no longer. Caister is yielded to the Duke of Norfolk—"for lack of victuals, lack of gunpowder; men's hearts failing, and no surety of rescue." Thus writes John of Gelston. His troubles are not yet over; for the great Duke harasses him with an appeal of murder, from the widows of two men that had been killed at the assault of the castle. But John contrives to quiet the widows, and very shortly is a favourite in the Duke's castle at Framlingham. A very singular world that of England in the fifteenth century—men, and women too, fighting to the death for house and land one day, and, when the matter is settled, lovingly embracing, the victor and the vanquished, till a new dispute sets them fighting again.

In this interval of family peace, John the younger has some important matters of his own to

attend to. He has failed in a love adventure with Mistress Alice Boleyn ; and so his brother is negotiating for him with Mistress Katharine Dudley. The times are unquiet ; and this wooing does not prosper. For John has been at the battle of Barnet, and " is hurt with an arrow in his right arm beneath the elbow." But Margaret the Queen is landed in the west, and the Pastons, who have ever been Lancastrians, have still their hopes. John is in a bad plight after the victory of Edward : " Now, I have neither meat, drink, clothes, leechcraft, nor money, but upon borrowing ; and I have essayed my friends so far that they begin to fail now in my greatest need." Up to the last, however, John is looking for " tidings." They come ; for the battle of Tewkesbury has been fought, and the game is up. It is pleasant to learn that this rash Paston escapes very easily ; for in a fortnight after the final struggle, " Sir Thomas Wingfield sent for me, and let me know that the king had signed my bill of pardon." Out of the battle-field these Yorkists and Lancastrians were not a sanguinary race. When their passions were high, and their harness on, they fought without flinching—a very brave pitiless race. They did their work effectually ; but that done, and a head or two upon London bridge, the lords went quietly back to their castles and the tenants to their ploughs. The world would go on in its own way, though Warwick the king-maker had fought his last fight. And so John Paston, even amidst his tribulation, writes

about his hawks and his horses ; and in another year is very busy about elections at Norwich. Sir John would be a knight of the shire ; but my Lord of Suffolk and my Lord of Norfolk willed it otherwise ; and John of Gelston was fain to dismiss his brother's friends, though he had paid nine shillings and three half-pence for their entertainment. But my Lady of Norfolk is a firm ally of Sir John ; and her agent writes to the bailiff of Maldon, "certifying you, that my said lady for her part and for such as be of her council, be most agreeable that both ye and all such as be her farmers, and tenants, and well-willers, should give your voice to a worshipful knight, and one of my lady's council, Sir John Paston." It is very pleasant to know that, even four hundred years ago, farmers and tenants were canvassed most courteously by great duchesses ; and that, although my Lords of Suffolk and Norfolk were agreed who should be Knights of the Shire, the burgesses of Maldon required a little coaxing even from the castle of Framlingham. Truly polite is the great lady. There is no intimidation ; no threatening to dispossess tenants, or to take away custom from cheesemongers. The truth is, that the greatest in the land depended very much upon the good will of the cultivators and the traders ; and though they sometimes racked them by purveyance and other devices, they had to deal with a sturdy race who knew that "the toe of the peasant" had come "near the heel of the courtier." With all the

fighting that was going on up and down, the commonalty were prospering; and thus the great lady's agent, although he just hints that he is coming for rents, asks the sweet voices of the lieges in the humblest guise, praying "that ye fail not to speed my lady's intention in this matter, as ye intend to do her as great a pleasure as if ye gave her an hundred pounds."

John of Gelston is "on with a new love;" albeit we are not told how he was "off with the old." Mistress Alice Boleyn and Mistress Katharine Dudley *exeunt*. Enter Mistress Elizabeth Eberton. His "fantazy" inclines to this lady, even "if Eberton would not give so much with Mistress Elizabeth his daughter as I might have with the other." The other! John Paston, with his "tawny-gown furred with black, and his doublet of purple satin, and doublet of black satin," may throw his handkerchief first at one and then at the other in a very Turk-like and irresistible fashion. John is not so nice now as when he vowed his sister should not wed "for to sell candle and mustard at Framlingham." He requests Sir John "ere that ye depart out of London to speak with Harry Eberton's wife, draper, and to inform her that I am proffered a marriage in London which is worth six hundred marks, and better, with whom I prayed you to commune, inasmuch as I might not tarry in London myself; always reserving that if so be that Mrs. Eberton will deal with me, that you should not conclude in the other place." Good plain

words these. We do these matters pretty much in the same spirit, but our hypocrisy will not permit us to talk of a lady-mother dealing with us. Sir John Paston has no sinecure with this matrimonial diplomacy. He is not only to commune with the draper's wife, but he is desired to "commune with John Lee and his wife, and to understand how the matter at the Black Friars doth; and that ye will see and speak with the thing herself, and with her father and mother." He means no harm when he calls the young lady a "thing"—it is a pretty, endearing phrase which shows his love for six hundred marks. We presume that the "thing" is the rival to the draper's daughter. But there is a widow in the wind. "Also that it like you to speak to your apothecary, which was sometime the Earl of Warwick's apothecary, and to weet of him what the widow of the Black Friars is worth, and what her husband's name was—he can tell all, for he is executor to the widow's husband." John has marked the widow down, though he does not even know her name. A few months before, he was unlucky with a widow, for his brother writes to him, "I have done my devoir to know my lady Walgrave's stomach, which, as God help me, and to be plain to you, I find in her no matter nor cause that I might take comfort of. She will in no wise receive nor keep your ring." But there is comfort in prospect. Nothing discouraged, John now writes to his brother, "I understand that Mistress Fitzwalter hath a sister, a

maid, to marry; I trow an ye entreated him, she might come into Christian man's hands: I pray you speak with Master Fitzwalter of that matter." She does not come into the hands of that disinterested Christian, John Paston; for Sir John says, "You make you surer than I deem you be, for I deem that her friends will not be content with Bedingfield's surety nor yours." They made hard and fast bargains, these dealers in wares matrimonial. Fortune, however, is at length propitious. Dame Elizabeth Brews hath a daughter, Margery; and the dame looks favourably upon John, who is Margery's cousin. Sir Thomas Brews will give a hundred pounds, and her grandfather fifty marks; and the good mother writes, "an we accord I shall give you a great treasure, that is, a witty gentlewoman, and, if I say it, both good and virtuous; for if I should take money for her I would not give her for a thousand pounds."

This, at last, is a pretty wooing, with some heart in it, on one side at least. The lady-mother writes to John, "Upon Friday is Saint Valentine's day, and every bird chooseth him a mate; and if it like you to come on Thursday at night, and so purvey you that you may abide there till Monday, I trust to God that ye shall so speak to mine husband; and I shall pray that we bring the matter to a conclusion." The young lady soon came to a conclusion herself after that Valentine's day. Here is as pretty a love-letter as ever sprang from womanly tenderness, above all doubt or disguise:

“Right Reverend and Worshipful, and my right well-beloved Valentine, I recommend me unto you, full heartily desiring to hear of your welfare, which I beseech Almighty God long for to preserve unto his pleasure and your heart’s desire. And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I am not in good health of body nor of heart, nor shall be till I hear from you. And my lady my mother hath laboured the matter to my father full diligently, but she can no more get than ye know of, for the which God knoweth I am full sorry. But if that ye love me, as I trust verily ye do, ye will not leave me therefore; for if that ye had not half the livelihood that ye have, for to do the greatest labour that any woman alive might, I would not forsake you.” Charming Margery Brews! What a disgrace to manhood is it that cold John Paxton went on chaffering for months about the ready penny; whilst Sir Thomas Brews would in no wise depart from the final proposal—two hundred marks, and board for three years if the married people chose to accept it. In a year they are married; and the “Right well-beloved Valentine” is addressed by Margery as “Right reverend and worshipful husband.” But the old trouble of the house is still hanging over them. John Paston writes in 1479, “It is told me that Nicholas Barley, the squire, hath taken an action of debt against me this term. I pray you let Wheatly or somebody speak with him, and let him weet that if he sue me softly this term, that he shall be paid

ere the next term be at an end. It is about six pounds, and in faith he should have had it ere this time, an our threshers of Swainsthorp had not died." There was a grievous sickness in the land. John has corn in his barns. The threshers die ; and Squire Barley must be asked to sue John softly till the wheat can be turned into cash. The great landed proprietors of that fifteenth century had some troubles of which their descendants of the nineteenth are happily ignorant, sorely as they have been complaining from that day to this, of their peculiar burdens and injuries. The Pastons, brave souls, fought against fortune, but they made slight moaning.

Whilst John Paston has been wooing and marrying, Caister has been recovered by the ejected family. The Duke of Norfolk dies, and Sir John Paston walks in. He is surrounded by troubles. A lawsuit starts up with "Uncle Clement;" and there is an old suit with the Duke of Suffolk ; and poor Sir John, with his castle of Caister, and his manors here and there, is in pitiful straits ; and good ancient Margaret, the mother, is the depository of his griefs, his friend and best counsellor. He has taken his gown of velvet and other gear out of pledge, at the cost of five marks ; he had hoped to have borrowed of Townsend, but Townsend is ill. If he has not ten pounds, he can do little good, and wots not how to come home. "This gear hath troubled me so that it hath made me more than half-sick, as God help me." Poor

solitary Sir John, within a fortnight, is dead in London, and buried in the White Friars. Old Agnes, the grandmother, dies about the same time. John, the second brother, is now Lord of Caister; and he seems to have prospered better than his brother or his father; for he is high-sheriff of Norfolk, and a knight banneret before he is gathered to his ancestors in 1503. He and his Margery dwell in Caister. On the 24th of December, 1484, the loving and careful wife writes, "Right worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you: please it you to weet that I sent your eldest son to my Lady Morley, to have knowledge what sports were used in her house in Christmas next following after the decease of my lord her husband; and she said that there were none disguisings, nor harping, nor luting, nor singing, nor none loud disports; but playing at the tables, and chess, and cards; such disports she gave her folks leave to play and none other."

Who is sorrowed for, so that the harp and the lute and the voice of song are hushed this Christmas at Caister? Margaret Paston, who wore her "bright sanguine" wedding gown in 1440, is gone to sleep beside her husband in Broomholm Priory.

These Paston Letters were written in the days before the Post. Carriers there were, and pack-horses, and traders who went from Norwich to London at Bartholomew Fair, and these might convey a letter safely. The great people could

afford to send a letter by a special messenger, with "Ride, ride, ride for your life." But the Pastons availed themselves of less costly modes of communication.

The Paston Letters were written in the days before Newspapers. They tell of public events as fully as of private. Their news is a little old in its date—but what matters that? The light of a star may be centuries coming to us, as the astronomers hold; but it is not less a light when it has come. Sir John Paston writes, in a letter to his mother in the spring of 1475, to tell the news of the battle of Morat, which was fought in the autumn of 1474. "Our own Correspondent" would have dispatched the tidings somewhat more quickly; but perhaps not quite so compendiously: "After this conquest of Lorraine, the Duke of Burgundy took great courage to go upon the land of the Swiss to conquer them; but they bearded him at an unset place, and hath distressed him, and hath slain the most part of his vanward, and won all his ordnance and artillery, and moreover all stuff that he had in his host, except men and horse that fled not; but they rode that night twenty miles; and so the rich salets, helmets, garters, nowches, gelt, and all is gone, with tents, pavilions and all, and so men deem his pride is abated." Look at Comines, and you will find that Sir John had got to the root of the matter.

The Paston Letters were written in the days before Banks. This distressed family seem luckily to

have kept out of the hands of the Jews ; but if it had been thought honest in those days to take interest, the perpetual labour and humiliation to scrape together a few pounds might have been avoided. But what could bankers have done for them in anticipation of rents, when there was little exchange of commodities, in a country where producers and consumers were widely separated?

The Paston Letters were written in the days before Power-looms ; so that a new coat and a new gown were matters to be very earnest about, even with a knight-banneret and a lady of the manor.

The Paston Letters were written in the days before the Printing-Press ; and so, some may marvel that they are so clearly expressed, and have so many just thoughts, and are for the most part earnest and to the purpose. The very absence of any character derived from a current literature is, rightly considered, a charm of this correspondence. Romances, indeed, the ladies had to read, of Arthur, and Guy, and Richard Cœur de Lion ; and they had many an old ballad, now preserved or lost ; and they had legends of the Saints. Sir John Paston had a library of which an inventory is left, consisting altogether of thirty-four volumes. Of these one was "in print." Anne Paston (of whom we hear little) had a book, 'The Siege of Thebes.' But neither gentleman nor lady had much opportunity for literature, even though one of the greatest of poets had long before opened his "well of

English undefiled." There is not one allusion to Chaucer in all this correspondence of fifty years.

The Paston Letters were written in the days before the Reformation, although the morning sky showed streaks of that day-spring; and so we have glimpses of friars and pilgrims; and Sir John Paston tells a tale of "a vision seen about the walls of Boulogne, as it had been a woman with a marvellous light; men deeming that Our Lady there will show herself a lover of that town." Let us not laugh at the undoubting mind of Sir John Paston; for, even in the England of 1853 there are believers in "Our Lady of Salette" appearing "as it had been a woman with a marvellous light." But with touches of what we call superstition, there was, amongst these people, a deep abiding sense of God over all—a part of the reverence that was a great characteristic of our nation—of children for parents, of servants for masters, of wives for husbands—of the laity for the church—ONCE UPON A TIME.

THE DISCOVERER OF MADEIRA.

It is the beginning of June : the year 1419. Two small vessels are leaving the port of Lisbon. The Infant Dom Henry waves his hand from the quay, as the commander of the little expedition bows profoundly from the deck of the leading ship. That commander is Gonzalves Zarco.

Where is Gonzalves sailing when he trusts his ships to the broad bosom of the Atlantic? Where, without the guides of modern navigation? Charts he has none. He has heard that Marco Polo brought from China to Europe the knowledge of an instrument that invariably pointed to the North—but he doubts. He will hug the land as long as he can. The meridian sun and the polar star must direct him in his need. His business is to find the Isles of the West, of which ancient tradition imperfectly whispers. In 1418 Gonzalves was engaged in exploring the coasts of Africa. He was shipwrecked on a little island, which he will now endeavour again to reach.

The seas are calm ; the days are bright and long. If the nights are dark, Gonzalves anchors. He is pretty certain of the course. In due time he reaches the small island of Porto Santo, in which, last year, he left two or three of his crew.

What is this strange relation which soon meets the ear of Gonzalves—a relation which is to give new ardour to his sagacious courage, but which has terrors for his superstitious seamen? On the north-east of the isle there appears, at a long distance, a thick darkness—a motionless cloud—which hangs over the sea, and reaches to the sky. That region of darkness—is it not the abyss? There, is the boundary of this earth; and beyond, is the entrance to the Shades. Sometimes a distant murmur, as of troubled waters, comes across the sea. It is the rush of the mournful river of Acheron. Some say, that when the Christians fled from the oppression of the Moors and Saracens, they found an island of refuge in this ocean; and that from that time a mysterious cloud covered that island, so that no enemy could come near to harm them. Who shall dare to pierce that cloud, and solve these mysteries?

Gonzalves sits on the beach of Porto Santo, and looks again and again in the direction of that cloud. When the morning sun shines bright in the East, the cloud is there. When the moon climbs the sky, the cloudy distance is still visible. It never changes its place; its form is always the same. Gonzalves will take counsel of Juan de Moralès, his pilot.

Juan is many years younger than Gonzalves; yet his forehead is wrinkled with cares that scarcely belong to the young. He has passed his boyhood in captivity in Morocco. He has done.

servile offices up to the period of manhood. He has been chained to the oar, and rowed his taskmasters through many a perilous surf. There is something strange and mysterious about him. His messmates shun him, for they say he is a Castilian, and an enemy to Portugal. He has the Castilian steadiness, with more than Castilian reserve. Misfortune has not abased him : he carries himself as loftily as the proudest of his countrymen ; and yet he is of a fairer complexion than those countrymen, and he speaks their language with a singular mixture of other dialects, and even of other tongues. But that may come of his long captivity amongst Christian slaves of all lands. Juan is not popular : but Gonzalves has unbounded confidence in his pilot.

“ Juan,” says Gonzalves, “ we will wait no longer. Hold you still your opinion ? ”

“ My belief is ever the same. That dark mass, so defined and unchanging, is a mountainous land, seen through a constant mist.”

“ You have the confidence of knowledge, rather than of conjecture. Did you ever hear speak of such a mountainous land ? In that quarter, leagues off, must lie the African deserts.”

“ I have no knowledge—except my dreams be knowledge. I dream of mountains, rising from the sea, covered with trees to the very summits ; of ravines, where rivers come dashing down out of the mountain mists, and rush brightly to the ocean ; of a narrow beach under the mountains,

where the waves break wildly, and yet how beautifully ! ”

“ Juan ! you must have seen such a land ! ”

“ Oh no ! it is a dream—a dream of the poor ship-boy’s loneliness.”

“ We will sail to-morrow, Juan.”

“ Good.”

“ Say nothing ; but steer us right to the cloud.”

The anchors are weighed in the dawn of a summer morning. A brisk breeze soon carries them away from Porto Santo. There is a man of importance on board, Francis Alcaforado, a squire of Dom Henry’s chamber. He is keeping a diary of that voyage—a busy inquisitive man.

“ Captain, where are you steering ? ”

“ To look for the Isles of the West.”

“ But you are sailing towards the darkness ! ”

“ I think they lie beyond the darkness.”

“ You are tempting Heaven. See, we are in the bosom of a mist. There is no sun in the sky. Change your course, Gonzalves.”

“ Sir, I must obey my commission.”

“ Look ! there is something darker still in the distance.”

“ I have seen it before—it is land.”

Juan is at the helm. He steers boldly through the mist. *It is* land. The sun is behind that mass of mountains. Juan must be cautious ; there are rocks in that sea. Gonzalves orders out the boats. There is a loud murmuring of surf upon a shore not very distant. The sun is mount-

ing out of the exhalation. The mist is rolling off. There are trees on the hills. The boats may near the shore. Glory to Saint Lawrence! That eastern cape first seen, and now doubled, shall be the Cape San Lourenço! All are joyful but Juan de Morales. It is not the land of his dreams. The crew gather round the pilot—and greet him well. But he is silent.

There is a streamlet gushing down to the sea. Gonzalves commands the crew to disembark. A priest goes with them. The water is blessed. The shore is blessed. The commander of the expedition proclaims that the mysterious cloud-land is a veritable possession of the King of Portugal.

And now they coast carefully along in their boats. They peer into the dark ravines, covered with everlasting forests. Again and again they land. Are there any inhabitants? Not a trace of human dwelling, not a footprint, not a token that man has ever abided here. Birds of bright plumage fly fearlessly about them. They come to a point where four rivers join in their course to the sea. They fill their flasks to carry that sparkling water to the banks of the yellow Tagus. They bring provisions on shore, and sit down in a green valley where gentle waterfalls are sparkling around. They penetrate a wood; the rough gales have torn up some trees. They elevate one tree, and form a cross; they kneel, and the priest gives his benediction. This point is Santa Cruz. They coast on; a tongue of land stretches far out—a shady

covert. Suddenly a flight of jays darkens the air. This shall be Punta dos Gralhos, the point of jays. Further on, another tongue of land is covered with cedars, and this, with the Punta dos Gralhos, forms a wooded bay. It shall be the bay of cedars. Another valley is reached, and here Gonzalves makes an attempt to ascend the high ground: he sees enough to satisfy him that what he has discovered is an island. Again Gonzalves leads the way in his boat, and reaches an open space, where the land is not encumbered with the dense growth of timber that has everywhere else met their view. The sea-beach to the foot of the mountains is covered with fennel, the *funcho* of the Portuguese. This beach shall be called *Funchal*.

What has happened to Juan de Moraldès? He stirs not—he speaks not. He looks upon the sea—he looks up the ravine. Then he rushes to gaze upon the islets which the rivers of that valley have formed in their perennial courses: he smiles, he weeps; he sees something very like the land of his dreams.

The ships have followed the course of the boats; but at a wide berth from the land. They now come into the bay of Funchal, and anchor in the river; here will the crew next day take in wood and water. They cannot have a pleasanter harbour. They will sleep in security. The sea is smooth; the air is balmy. The watch is set; and Juan, though his duty is ended, is amongst the

watchers. The ripple of the river seems a familiar sound. He listens, as if he expected some human voice to mingle with that murmur of waters. The moon rises. The wooded ravine lies before him in deep shadow ; but here and there is a breadth of silvery light. Is that the figure of a man moving on the bright greensward ? The sea-breeze stirs the topmost branches of the cedars, and their shadows, Juan, make up the semblance of humanity.

On the morrow the island is again explored. No sign of cultivation—no trace of man. In the heart of the mountains there are mighty chasms, into which the torrents rush, and form gentle rivers. Cedars and chestnut trees rise into the foggy summits of the highest peaks. Myrtles clothe the precipitous declivities. Deep caverns have been dug into the sides of the rocks by the untiring sea. Hush ! there is a noise as of the tread of men. A multitude of seals rush out from that hollow, with a sudden cry, and plunge into the waves. That point shall be Camara dos Lobos, the cave of seals. The navigation becomes more difficult. The surf is more dangerous on that rocky coast. Gonzalves will return to his ships in the bay of Funchal. He is eager to be once more in the Tagus: he has brave tidings for Dom Henry. One such discovery is enough for a summer. But what shall he call this noble island ? He takes counsel of the squire Alcaforado, who has been busy with his tablets incessantly. He

will write a narrative of this prosperous voyage, which shall be deposited in the archives of Portugal.* The island shall be called *Madeiro*—the island of Wood.

It is the summer of 1421, and Gonzalves Zarco is again embarking in the port of Lisbon.

The preparations for this voyage are very different from those of the expedition of 1419. One ship, of considerable tonnage, is now employed. Large stores of provisions are taken into the hold—raisins and olives, and casks of wine from Xeres and Oporto. There are live animals too in considerable numbers—sheep and goats, and a few mules. Cuttings of the choicest vines, and small plants from the orange groves, are carefully stowed and duly watered. There are implements of husbandry, and artificers' tools—spades and axes, anvils and hammers. Tents are there for shelter; spears and bows for defence. There are the nets of the fisherman and of the fowler. But, in greater abundance than all, packages of clothing. A colony is to be founded.

Gonzalves comes on board with his two sons. They carefully inspect a little cabin, that is fitted up with unusual luxury. They are satisfied—they

* In 1671 was published, at Paris, '*Relation Historique de la decouverte de l'isle de Madère*,' which professes to be a translation from a Portuguese book, of which the manuscript then existed. An abstract of this French work, which is the narrative of Francis Alcaforado, has been given in a new '*Biographie Universelle*,' 1852. The French work is stated to be a book of the most extreme rarity, and no copy, it appears, is known to exist of the Portuguese original.

go on shore. Presently a litter appears, borne by four of the crew, who tread briskly under their load. Gonzalves walks before them. The litter is set down on the deck, and a delicate girl is lifted out by the sons of Gonzalves, and carried to the decorated cabin. She scarcely speaks—she is ill and exhausted. The ship is under weigh. Juan de Morale's is again at the helm.

The heat of the day is over. The ship has dropped down the Tagus, and passed the bar. The distant vesper bell is sounding into the quiet evening. Anna Zarco is refreshed, and begs to be brought upon deck. A couch is made up at the stern. The sick girl speaks cheerfully to her father, as she watches the stars coming softly out of the blue sky. There is a light in the fort of St. Julian, which grows fainter and fainter as they sail on. Anna has fixed her lustrous eyes on that light. It is the last object that marks her native land. It is gone. It mingles with the stars. She looks in her father's face. A thought comes across him which forces a tear or two. Will Anna ever again see her birth-place? Will she reach her new home?

The ship's course is now direct to Madeiro. Every evening the feeble girl is brought upon the deck, and lies peacefully there, with her thin hand resting in the large rough palm of her father's. She listens with interest as the commander talks to his pilot. They talk of the beautiful island to which they are sailing, of its pleasant climate, its

green woods, its sparkling streams. They will land at Funchal. They will run up their houses on that sheltered beach ; their sheep and goats shall pasture in the green valley between the mountains. They will find clear sunny spots on the hill sides to plant their vines ; they will have an orange-grove sheltered from the north, and will water their plants by channels from the river, whose streams will never fail. "Quintas" of olive and maize shall flourish in that genial soil. They will have everything for comfort soon around them. Gonzalves has the command of the island—he will be a kind viceroy over few but happy subjects.

We see the shadow of Gonzalves, after he has landed, without storm or pirate to harm him during his passage. He has dwelt with his sons and his daughter for a short while in tents ; but a house strong enough to stand against the Atlantic gales is soon built ; it has abundance of conveniences ; other houses are growing up around them. Friends have come with Gonzalves to settle with him. An ecclesiastic is here to teach and to console. Before the equinox the good ship is to return to Lisbon with a diminished crew,—and a freight of native curiosities for Dom Henry, their patron.

Let us look at the shadow of Juan de Morales in this interval of his sea-life. He comes on shore daily to assist his captain ; he works at the buildings ; he cuts timber ; he dries the reeds and rushes of the watercourses for a ready thatch. Juan is handy ; and seems to have an almost instinctive

knowledge of the sweetest pastures for the sheep and the best soil for the corn and olives. But Juan has a gentler task to perform. Anna Zarco is grown strong enough to take exercise. Juan daily leads her mule up into the shady hills, or along the margin of the sea. Sometimes, when there is not a cloud in the sky, and there is a gentle ripple in the bay, Juan strews sweet rushes in his boat, on which Anna placidly lies, breathing the soft air with a sense of delight that is the herald of renovated health. Juan, then, tells her the seamen's stories of storm and wreck ; of pirates who lie in wait for the defenceless merchant-ship—the enemies of all nations ; of Moors, who, in their hatred of Christian people, fiercely attack every vessel that comes near their inhospitable coasts, and carry their crews to a life-long slavery. Juan tells her, too, of distant lands, for in his own captivity he has gathered much knowledge from other captives—of England, especially, and its great King Edward, and his wars in France. Of England Juan delights to talk ; and when Anna asks him of his own life, before he was in slavery at Fez, he has a confused story, with something English in his recollections, which makes her think that he is not a Castilian, as the sailors say he is. Gonzalves is happy that his daughter is gaining such health in this daily life, and willingly does he spare his pilot to be her guide and companion ; for in a few weeks Juan will return to Lisbon, and then, when the house is finished, and the quinta planted, he will

lead her mule himself, and himself will row her, in bright autumn days, under the shade of the mountains. There is a place about three miles off, where Anna's mule is often led by the pilot. He conducts her through a narrow defile, when suddenly they are in a valley—a mere chasm between the loftiest mountains—a solemn place, but one also of rare loveliness—for the basaltic rocks are clothed with evergreens, and the narrow, level plain has a smiling river running through its entire length. Juan delights to bring his tender charge to this secluded spot; but here he is ever more than usually silent.

One day, Anna looks in Juan's face, and sees that he has been weeping. There is one spot in that valley which he often stops at—a spot marked by a pile of stones. On this day Juan suddenly falls on his knees at this spot, and prays for a minute. Anna is scarcely surprised, for Juan is a mysterious man—quite unlike other seamen. She questions him.

“Juan, my kind nurse, for you have been as a nurse to me in my feebleness, why did you kneel, and why have you been weeping?”

“Señora! forgive me. I must not tell you. The knowledge that makes me weep is now little more than a vain memory. It has nothing in common with my present fortune. I shall sail again to Lisbon—perhaps never to come back. Do not ask me.”

“But, Juan! I look on you as a brother. I am

getting well under your care. Will you not confide in your sister?"

"Nay, lady! Yet I must speak. You will keep my secret. I believe that I knelt at my mother's grave!"

"Your mother's grave? How, Juan, could your mother ever come to this island, where never ships touched before my father's ship?"

"It is a wild story, an almost improbable story. But you shall hear it. My earliest memories, I once thought, were of my task-masters in Morocco, of whom I have before told you. I became a slave when I was four or five years old, as near as I may guess. There was a companion in my fate, who was kind to me—an English sailor. He taught me his language: he said he would one day tell me his own history. All that I knew was, that the ship in which he and I were sailing was captured by a corsair, and carried into Fez. I was in captivity twelve years; but I then escaped, and got to Spain. The infidels had made me a skilful seaman, and I had good knowledge of their coasts. After some time I went to Lisbon. I became your father's pilot. The Englishman and I had been soon separated; but he had told me something about an island in the west; and I gladly went with your father in quest of those western islands. When we came here two years ago, it seemed to me as if every thing were familiar; but yet confused. I was in a dream. In the spring of this year an English vessel came into the Tagus. I talked with

some of the crew. I spoke of our discovery of Madeiro, and of the prize it might be to the Crown of Portugal. An old sailor said, that the Portuguese were not the first discoverers. I grew angry ; but the Englishman was confident. I will repeat what he said :—

“ ‘The discoverer of that island was Robert Machin, my countryman. Robert Machin, a bold adventurer, won the love of Anne Arfet, the daughter of a Bristol merchant. His suit was rejected by the father ; but Robert married her, and carried her off in his ship. They were bound for the Mediterranean, but missed their course. Their vessel foundered in the Atlantic ; Machin and his wife were saved. They reached the wooded island, which you Portuguese have named Madeiro. They abode there three or four years ; in utter solitude, but contented and happy. The wife, then, sickened and died. They had a little boy ; but Robert could not endure that loneliness, and he dreaded now, that he might die, and that the boy should perish. He resolved to leave the island as he had come to it. He stowed his boat with chest-nuts, and with fish dried in the sun—the food on which he and his wife had always subsisted. It was a calm season, and he made good way. Off the coast of Morocco an English ship picked him up. I was the mate of that ship. Poor fellow ! his toil and his grief had been too much for him. He died in a few weeks—his boy was my charge. I was little use to him, for we were soon taken by

a rover, and carried into Fez. I wish I could meet with that orphan boy. But that will never be!"

Anna Zarco blushes and trembles:—"I know the rest. You were that little boy; and this island is your inheritance, and not my father's discovery."

"Keep my secret, Anna. I love your father, and would not rob him of an atom of his honour."

Anna Zarco does not keep the secret from her father, who is a just man, and not unmindful of his daughter's happiness.

Juan de Morales does not return to Lisbon.

In a few years there is a pretty cottage, and a vineyard in the "Corral," where, not far from the tomb of stones, dwell other Machins, John and Anne, whose shadows are pleasant to look on.

THE SILENT HIGHWAY.

ONE of the most remarkable pictures of ancient manners which has been transmitted to us is that in which the poet Gower describes the circumstances under which he was commanded by King Richard II.

“To make a book after his hest.”

The good old rhymmer,—“the moral Gower,” as Chaucer calls him,—who probably resided in Southwark, where his monument may yet be seen in the church of St. Mary Overies, had taken boat; and upon the broad river he met the king in his stately barge. It was an accidental meeting, he tells us. The monarch, who had come most probably from his palace of Westminster, where thousands ministered, it is said, to his luxurious tastes, espied the familiar face of the minstrel, and stopped him upon that great highway of London, which was an open road for the meanest as for the highest. He called him on board his own vessel, and desired him to book “some new thing.” This was the origin of the ‘*Confessio Amantis*.’ But the poet shall record the story in his own simple words:—

“As it befel upon a tide,
As thing which should then betide,

Under the towné of New Troy,
Which took of Brute his firsté joy ;
In Thames, when it was flowing,
As I by boate came rowing,
So as fortune her time set,
My liege lord perchance I met,
And so befel, as I came nigh,
Out of my boat, when he me sygh, (*saw*)
He bade me come into his barge :
And when I was with him at large,
Among other thinges said
He hath this charge upon me laid,
And bade me do my business,
That to his high worthiness
Some new thinge I should book,
That he himself it might look,
After the form of my writing.
And thus upon his commanding,
Mine hearté is well the more glad
To writé so as he me bade."

Nothing can be more picturesque than this description, and nothing can more forcibly carry us into the very heart of the past. With the exception of some of the oldest portions of the Tower of London, there is scarcely a brick or a stone left standing that may present to us a memorial of "the king's chamber"* of four hundred and fifty years ago. There, indeed, is the river, still flowing and still ebbing,—the most ancient thing we can look upon,—which made London what it was and what it is. Nearly all that then adorned its banks has perished ; and many of the stirring histories of the busy life that moved upon its waters have

* *Camera Regia* ; which title, immediately after the Norman Conquest, London began to have.—CAMDEN.

become to us as obscure as the legend of "New Troy."

The 'Prologue' of Gower, in the true spirit of the romantic times, tells us of the town which was founded by the Trojan Brute. Here was the fable which the middle-age minstrels rejoiced in, and which History has borrowed from Poetry without any compromise of her propriety. The origin of nations must be fabulous; and if we would penetrate into the dark past we must be satisfied with the torch-light which fable presents to us. We commend, therefore, the belief of the good citizens of London, who, in the time of Henry VI., sent the king a copy of an ancient tract, which says of London, "According to the credit of chronicles it is considerably older than Rome; and that it was by the same Trojan author, built by Brute, after the likeness of great Troy, before that built by Romulus and Remus. Whence to this day it useth and enjoyeth the ancient city Troy's liberties, rights, and customs."* This is dealing with a legend in a business-like manner, worthy of grave aldermen and sheriffs. Between Brute and Richard II. there is a long interval; and the chroniclers have filled it up with many pleasant stories, and the antiquarians have embellished it with many ingenious theories. We must leap over all these. One ancient writer, however, who speaks from his own knowledge,—William Fitz-Stephen, who died in 1191,—has left us a record in his 'Description of London,' which will

* Stow, book i.

take us back a few hundred years further. The original is in Latin. "The wall of the city is high and great, continued with seven gates, which are made double, and on the north distinguished with turrets by spaces : likewise on the south London hath been enclosed with walls and towers, but the large river of Thames, well stored with fish, and in which the tide ebbs and flows, by continuance of time hath washed, worn away, and cast down those walls." Here, then, six hundred and fifty years ago, we find the river-bank of London in the same state as described by Sir Thomas More in his imaginary capital of Amaurote :—"The city is compassed about with a high and thick stone wall, full of turrets and bulwarks. A dry ditch, but deep and broad, and overgrown with bushes, briers, and thorns, goeth about three sides or quarters of the city. To the fourth side the river itself serveth as a ditch."* The Saxon chronicle tells us that in the year 1052 Earl Godwin, with his navy, passed along the southern side of the river, and so assailed the walls. A hundred and fifty years after, in the time of Fitz-Stephen, the walls were gone. About the same period arose the stone bridge of London ; but that has perished before the eyes of our own generation.

There is another passage in Fitz-Stephen which takes us, as do most of his descriptions, into the every-day life of the ancient Londoners—their schools, their feasting, and their sports :—

"In Easter holydays they fight battles on the

* *Utopia*, b. ii. c. ii.

water. A shield is hanged on a pole, fixed in the midst of the stream ; a boat is prepared without oars, to be carried by violence of the water, and in the forepart thereof standeth a young man, ready to give charge upon the shield with his lance. If so be he break his lance against the shield and doth not fall, he is thought to have performed a worthy deed. If so be, without breaking his lance, he runneth strongly against the shield, down he falleth into the water, for the boat is violently forced with the tide ; but on each side of the shield ride two boats, furnished with two young men, which recover him that falleth as soon as they may. Upon the bridge, wharfs, and houses by the river side, stand great numbers to see and laugh thereat." Four centuries afterwards Stow saw a somewhat similar game :—"I have seen also in the summer season, upon the river of Thames, some rowed in wherries, with staves in their hands, flat at the fore-end, running one against another, and, for the most part one or both of them were overthrown and well ducked." Howel says, "There was in former times a sport used upon the Thames, which is *now discontinued* : it was for two wherries to row, and run one against the other, with staves in their hands, flat at the fore-end ; which kind of recreation is much practised amongst the gondolas of Venice."*

From the time of Fitz-Stephen to that of Gower we may readily conceive that the water-communi-

* *Londinopolis* : 1657.

cation between one part of London and another, and between London and Westminster, was constantly increasing. A portion of London Bridge was moveable, which enabled vessels of burden to pass up the river to unload at Queenhithe and other wharfs. Stairs (called bridges) and Water-gates studded the shores of both cities. Palaces arose, such as the Savoy, where the powerful nobles kept almost regal state. The Courts of Law were fixed at Westminster; and thither the citizens and strangers from the country daily resorted, preferring the easy highway of the Thames to the almost impassable road that led from Westminster to the village of Charing, and onward to London. John Lydgate, who wrote in the time of Henry V., has left us a very curious poem, entitled 'London Lyckpeny.' He gives us a picture of his coming to London to obtain legal redress of some grievance, but without money to pursue his suit. Upon quitting Westminster Hall, he says,

"Then to Westminster Gate I presently went."

This is undoubtedly the Water-gate; and, without describing anything beyond the cooks, whom he found busy with their bread and beef at the gate, "when the sun was at high prime," he adds,

"Then unto London I did me hie."

By water he no doubt went, for 'through Charing he would have made a day's journey. Wanting money, he has no choice but to return to the

country ; and having to go “into Kent,” he applies to the watermen at Billingsgate :—

“ Then hied I me to Billingsgate,
And one cried *hoo*—go we hence :
I pray’d a bargeman, for God’s sake,
That he would spare me my expense.
Thou scap’st not here, quoth he, under two pence.”

We have a corroboration of the accuracy of this picture in Lambarde’s ‘Perambulation of Kent.’ The old topographer informs us that in the time of Richard II. the inhabitants of Milton and Gravesend agreed to carry in their boats, from London to Gravesend, a passenger, with his truss or farthell, for two-pence.

The poor Kentish suitor, without two-pence in his pocket to pay the Gravesend bargeman, takes his solitary way on foot homeward. The *gate* where he was welcomed with the cry of *hoo*—ho, ahoy—was the great landing-place of the coasting-vessels ; and the king here anciently took his toll upon imports and exports. The Kentishman comes to Billingsgate from Cornhill ; but it was not an uncommon thing for boats, even in those times, to accomplish the feat of passing through the fall occasioned by the narrowness of the arches of London Bridge ; and the loss of life in these adventures was not an unfrequent occurrence. Gifford, in a note upon a passage in Ben Jonson’s ‘Staple of News,’ says somewhat pettishly of the old bridge, “had an alderman or a turtle been lost there, the nuisance would have been long

since removed." A greater man than an alderman—John Mowbray, the second Duke of Norfolk—nearly perished there in 1428. But there were landing-places in abundance between Westminster and London Bridge, so that a danger such as this was not necessary to be incurred. When the unfortunate Eleanor Cobham, Duchess of Gloucester, was condemned to do penance in London in three open places, on three several days, she was brought by water from Westminster; and on the 13th November, 1440, was put on shore at the Temple bridge; on the 15th, at the Old Swan; and, on the 17th, at Queenhithe. Here, exactly four centuries ago, we have the same stairs described by the same names as we find at the present day. The Old Swan (close to London Bridge) was the *Old Swan* in the time of Henry VI., as it continued to be in the time of Elizabeth. If we turn to the earliest maps of London we find, in the same way, Broken Wharf, and Paul's Wharf, and Essex Stairs, and Whitehall Stairs. The abiding-places of the watermen appear to have been as unchanging as their thoroughfare—the same river ever gliding, and the same inlets from that broad and cheerful highway to the narrow and gloomy streets.

The watermen of London, like every other class of the people, were once musical; and their "oars kept time" to many a harmony, which, if not so poetical as the song of the gondoliers, was full of the heart of merry England. The old city chro-

nicler, Fabyan, tells us that John Norman, Mayor of London (he held this dignity in 1454), was "the first of all mayors who brake that ancient and old-continued custom of *riding* to Westminster upon the morrow of Simon and Jude's day." John Norman "*was rowed thither by water*, for the which the waterman made of him a roundel, or song, to his great praise, the which began—

' Row the boat, Norman, row to thy leman.'

The watermen's ancient chorus, as we collect from old ballads, was

" Heave and how, rumbelow ;"

and their burden was still the same in the time of Henry VIII., not forgetting, " Row the boat, Norman." * Well might the first mayor who carried the pomp of the city to the great Thames, and made

" The barge *he* sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn on the water."

deserve the praises of watermen in all time ! We could willingly spare many more intrinsically valuable things than the city water-pageant ; for it takes us even now into the old forms of life ; and if it shows us more than all other pageants something of the perishableness of power and dignity, it has a fine antique grandeur about it, and tells us that London, and what belongs to London, are not of yesterday.

* Skelton.

We every now and then turn up in the old Chronicles, and Memoirs, and Letters that have been rescued from mice and mildew, some graphic description of the use of the river as the common highway of London. These old writers were noble hands at scene-painting. What a picture Hall gives us of the populousness of the Thames!—the perfect contrast to Wordsworth's

“The river glideth at his own sweet will”—

in the story which he tells us of the Archbishop of York, after leaving the widow of Edward IV. in the sanctuary of Westminster, sitting “alone below on the rushes, all desolate and dismayed,” returning home to York Place in the dawning of the day; “and when he opened his windows and looked on the Thames, he might see the river full of boats of the Duke of Gloucester his servants, watching that no person should go to sanctuary, nor none should pass unsearched.” Cavendish, in his ‘Life of Wolsey,’ furnishes as graphic a description of the great Cardinal hurrying to and fro on the highway of the Thames, between his imperious master and the injured Katharine, when Henry had become impatient of the tedious conferences of the Court at Blackfriars sitting on the question of his divorce, and desired to throw down with the strong hand the barriers that kept him from the Lady Anne:—“Thus this court passed from session to session, and day to day, in so much that a certain day the King sent for my lord at the

breaking up one day of the court to come to him into Bridewell. And to accomplish his commandment he went unto him, and being there with him in communication in his grace's privy chamber from eleven until twelve of the clock and past at noon, my lord came out and departed from the King, and took his barge at the Black Friars, and so went to his house at Westminster. The Bishop of Carlisle, being with him in his barge, said unto him (wiping the sweat from his face), 'Sir,' quoth he, 'it is a very hot day.' 'Yea,' quoth my Lord Cardinal, 'if ye had been as well chafed as I have been within this hour, ye would say it were very hot.'" Between Westminster and the Tower, and the Tower and Greenwich, the Thames was especially the royal road. When Henry VII. willed the coronation of his Queen Elizabeth, she came from Greenwich attended by "barges freshly furnished with banners and streamers of silk." When Henry VIII. avowed his marriage with Anne Boleyn, she was brought by "all the crafts of London" from Greenwich to the Tower, "trumpets, shawms, and other divers instruments, all the way playing and making great melody." The river was not only the festival highway, but the more convenient one, for kings as well as subjects. Hall tells us, "This year (1536), in December, was the Thames of London all frozen over, *wherefore* the king's majesty, with his beautiful spouse Queen Jane, rode throughout the city of London to Greenwich." The interesting volume of the

'Privy Purse Expenses of Henry VIII.' contains item upon item of sums paid to watermen for waiting with barge and boat. The barge was evidently always in attendance upon the king; and the great boat was ever busy, moving household stuff and servants from Westminster to Greenwich or to Richmond. In 1531 we have a curious evidence of the king being deep in his polemical studies, in a record of payment "to John, the king's bargeman, for coming twice from Greenwich to York Place with a great boat with books for the king." We see the "great Eliza" on the Thames, in all her pomp, as Raleigh saw her out of his prison-window in the Tower, in 1592, as described in a letter from Arthur Gorges to Cecil:—"Upon a report of her majesty's being at Sir George Carew's, Sir W. Raleigh having gazed and sighed a long time at his study-window, from whence he might discern the barges and boats about the Blackfriars stairs, suddenly he brake out into a great distemper, and sware that his enemies had on purpose brought her majesty thither to break his gall in sunder with Tantalus' torment, that when she went away he might see death before his eyes; with many such-like conceits. And, as a man transported with passion, he swore to Sir George Carew that he would disguise himself, and get into a pair of oars to ease his mind with but a sight of the queen." In the time of Elizabeth and the First James, and onward to very recent days, the North bank of the Thames was studded with the

palaces of the nobles ; and each palace had its landing-place and its private retinue of barges and wherries ; and many a freight of the brave and beautiful has been borne, amidst song and merriment, from house to house, to join the masque and the dance ; and many a wily statesman, muffled in his cloak, has glided along unseen in his boat to some dark conference with his ambitious neighbour. Nothing could then have been more picturesque than the Strand, with its broad gardens, and lofty trees, and embattled turrets and pinnacles. Upon the river itself, busy as it was, fleets of swans were ever sailing ; and they ventured unmolested into that channel which is now narrowed by vessels from every region. Paulus Jovius, who died in 1552, describing the Thames, says, "This river abounds in swans, swimming in flocks ; the sight of whom and their noise are vastly agreeable to the fleets that meet them in their course." Shakspeare must have seen this sight, when he made York compare the struggle of his followers at the battle of Wakefield to a swan encountering a tidal stream :—

" As I have seen a swan,
With bootless labour swim against the tide,
And spend her strength with over-matching waves."*

But there were those, during three centuries, to whom the beauties of the silent highway could have offered no pleasure. The Thames was the road by which the victim of despotism came from

* Henry VI., part III.

the Tower to Westminster Hall, in most cases to return to his barge with the edge of the axe towards his face. One example is enough to suggest many painful recollections. When the Duke of Buckingham was conducted from his trial to the barge, "Sir Thomas Lovel desired him to sit on the cushions and carpet ordained for him. He said, 'Nay; for when I went to Westminster I was Duke of Buckingham; now I am but Edward Bohun, the most caitiff of the world.'*" But these exhibitions, frequent as they were, occupied little of the thoughts of those who were moving upon the Thames, in hundreds of boats, intent upon business or amusement. In the beginning of the seventeenth century the river was at the height of its glory as the great thoroughfare of London. Howel maintains that the river of Thames hath not her fellow, "if regard be had to those forests of masts which are perpetually upon her; the variety of smaller wooden bottoms playing up and down; the stately palaces that are built upon both sides of her banks so thick; which made divers foreign ambassadors affirm that the most glorious sight in the world, take water and land together, was to come upon a high tide from Gravesend, and shoot the bridge to Westminster."† Of the "smaller wooden bottoms," Stow computes that there were in his time as many as two thousand; and he makes the very extraordinary statement,

* Hall.

† Londinopolis, p. 403.

that there were forty thousand watermen upon the rolls of the company, and that they could furnish twenty thousand men for the fleet. The private watermen of the court and of the nobility were doubtless included in this large number. It is evident, from the representations of a royal procession in the early times of James I., that, even on common occasions, the sovereign moved upon the Thames with regal pomp, surrounded with many boats of guards and musicians.

The Inns of Court, too, filled as they were not only with the great practitioners of the law, but with thousands of wealthy students, gave ample employment to the watermen. Upon the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth to the Palatine, in 1613, the gentlemen of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn presented a sumptuous masque at court. "These maskers, with their whole train in all triumphant manner and good order, took barge at Winchester Stairs, about seven of the clock that night, and rowed to Whitehall against the tide: the chief maskers went in the king's barge, royally adorned, and plenteously furnished with a great number of great wax lights, that they alone made a glorious show: other gentlemen went in the prince's barge, and certain other went in other fair barges, and were led by two admirals: besides all these, they had four lusty warlike galleys to convoy and attend them; each barge and galley, being replenished with store of torch-lights, made so rare and brave a show upon the water, as the like was never seen

upon the Thames.”* When Charles was created Prince of Wales, in 1616, he came from Barn Elms to Whitehall in great aquatic state. In 1625, when Henrietta Maria arrived in London (June 16), “the king and queen in the royal barge, with many other barges of honour and thousands of boats, passed through London Bridge to Whitehall; infinite numbers, besides these, in wherries, standing in houses, ships, lighters, western barges, and on each side of the shore.”† What a contrast does this splendour and rejoicing present to the scene which a few years disclosed!—“The barge-windows,” (says Mr. Mead, the writer of this letter,) “notwithstanding the vehement shower, were open: and all the people shouting amain. She put out her hand, and shook it unto them.” The Whitehall, to which the daughter of Henri Quatre was thus conveyed, had another tale to tell in some twenty-three years; and the long tragedy of the fated race of the Stuarts almost reaches its catastrophe, when, in a cold winter night of 1688, the wife of James II. takes a common boat at Whitehall to fly with her child to some place of safety; and when in a few weeks later the fated king steps into a barge, surrounded by Dutch guards, amidst the triumph of his enemies, and the pity even of those good men who blamed his obstinacy and rashness: “I saw him take barge,” says Evelyn,—“a sad sight.” But let us turn from

* Howes' Continuation of Stow's Annals, p. 1007.

† Ellis's Letters, vol. iii, p. 196.

political changes to those more enduring revolutions which changes of manners produce.

We have before us a goodly folio volume of some six or seven hundred pages, closely printed, and containing about seventy thousand lines, for the most part of heroic verse, entitled "All the Works of John Taylor, the Water-Poet, being sixty and three in number, collected into one volume by the Author." John Taylor, who made this collection of his tracts in 1630, was literally a Thames waterman, working daily for his bread. The waterman's verses are not so ambitious as those of the Venetian gondolier, Antonio Bianchi, who wrote an epic poem in twelve cantos; but they possess a great deal of rough vigour, and altogether open to us very curious views of London manners in the early part of the seventeenth century. Taylor is never ashamed of his trade; and he cannot endure it to be supposed that his waterman's vocation is incompatible with the sturdiest assertion of his rights to the poetical dignity. In one of his controversies—for he generally had some stiff quarrel on hand with witlings who looked down upon him—he says, addressing William Fennor, "the king's rhyming poet,"

"Thou say'st that Poetry descended is
From Poverty: thou tak'st thy mark amiss.
In spite of weal or woe, or want of pelf,
It is a kingdom of content itself."

Such a spirit would go far to make a writer whose works would be worth looking at two centuries after

the praise or abuse of his contemporaries was forgotten; and so homely John Taylor, amongst the race of satirists and manner-painters, is not to be despised. "The gentleman-like sculler at the Hope on the Bankside" (as he makes Fennor call him) lived in a poetical atmosphere. He probably had the good fortune to ferry Shakspeare from Whitehall to Paris Garden; he boasts of his acquaintance with Ben Jonson: and the cause of his great quarrel with Fennor is thus set forth: "Be it known unto all men, that I, John Taylor, waterman, did agree with William Fennor (who arrogantly and falsely entitles himself the King's Majesty's Rhyming Poet) to answer me at a trial of wit, on the 7th of October last, 1614, at the Hope Stage on the Bankside; and when the day came that the play should have been performed, the house being filled with a great audience who had spent their money extraordinarily, then this companion for an ass ran away and left me for a fool, amongst thousands of critical censurers." Taylor had taken his waterman's position in a spot where there was a thriving trade. The Bankside was the landing-place to which the inhabitants of Westminster, and of the Strand, and of London west of Paul's, would daily throng in the days of the Drama's glory; when the Globe could boast of the highest of the land amongst its visitors; when Essex and Southampton, out of favour at court, repaired thither to listen, unsatiated, to the lessons of the great master

of philosophy ; when crowds of earnest people, not intent only upon amusement, went there to study their country's history, or learn the "humanities" in a school where the poet could dare to proclaim universal truths in an age of individual dissimulation ; and when even the idle profligate might for a moment forget his habits of self-indulgence, and be aroused into sympathy with his fellows, by the art which then triumphed, and still triumphs, over all competition. Other places of amusement were on the Bankside—the Paris Garden, the Rose, and the Hope playhouses ; and in earlier times, and even when the drama had reached its highest point of popular attraction, on the same spot were the "Bear-houses"—places of resort not only for the rude multitude, but to which Elizabeth carried the French ambassador to exhibit the courage of English bull-dogs. Imagine Southwark the peculiar ground of summer theatres and *circi*, with no bridge but that of London, and we may easily understand that John Taylor sang the praises of the river with his whole heart :—

" But noble Thames, whilst I can hold a pen,
I will divulge thy glory unto men :
Thou, in the morning when my coin is scant,
Before the evening doth supply my want."*

But the empire of the watermen was destined to be invaded ; and its enemies approached to its conquest, after the Tartarian fashion, with mighty

* Praise of Hemp-seed.

chariots crowded with multitudes. Taylor was not slow to complain of this change. In his 'Thief,' published in 1622, he tells us that,

"When Queen Elizabeth came to the crown,
A coach in England then was scarcely known ;"

and he adds, "'tis not fit" that

"Fulsome madams, and new scurvy squires,
Should jolt the streets at pomp, at their desires,
Like great triumphant Tamburlaines, each day,
Drawn with the pamper'd jades of Belgia,
That almost all the streets are chok'd outright,
Where men can hardly pass, from morn till night,
Whilst watermen want work."

In a prose tract, published in the following year, Taylor goes forth to the attack upon "coaches" with great vehemence, but with a conviction that his warfare will not be successful: "I do not inveigh against any coaches that belong to persons of worth or quality, but only against the caterpillar swarm of hirelings. *They have undone my poor trade*, whereof I am a member; and though I look for no reformation, yet I expect the benefit of an old proverb, 'Give the losers leave to speak.'"^{*} He maintains that "this infernal swarm of trade-spillers (coaches) have so overrun the land that we can get no living upon the water; for I dare truly affirm that every day in any term, especially if the court be at Whitehall, they do rob us of our livings, and carry five hundred sixty fares daily

^{*} The World runs on Wheels.

from us." This is a very exact computation, formed perhaps upon personal enumeration of the number of hired coaches passing to Westminster. He naturally enough contrasts the quiet of his own highway with the turmoil of the land-thoroughfare: "I pray you look into the streets, and the chambers or lodgings in Fleet Street or the Strand, how they are pestered with them (coaches), especially after a mask or a play at the court, where even the very earth quakes and trembles, the casements shatter, tatter, and clatter, and such a confused noise is made, so that a man can neither sleep, speak, hear, write, or eat his dinner or supper quiet for them." The irruption of coaches must have been as fearful a calamity to John Taylor and his fraternity in those days, as the establishment of railroads has been to postmasters and postboys in our own. These transitions diminish something of the pleasure with which we must ever contemplate a state of progress; but the evil is temporary and the good is permanent, and when we look back upon the past we learn to estimate the evil and the good upon broad principles. Half-a-century hence, a London without railroads, that inns and stages might be maintained, would appear as ludicrous a notion as that of a London without carriages, that John Taylor might row his wherry in prosperity, gladdened every day by the smiles of ladies, "whose ancient lodgings were near St. Katherine's, the Bankside, Lambeth Marsh, Westminster, White-fryars, Coleharbor, or any other place near the

•

Thames, who were wont to take a boat and air themselves upon the water."

Of the elder vehicles that preceded coaches, whether rejoicing in the name of chare, car, chariot, caroch, or whirlicote, we have little here to say. Their dignity was not much elevated above that of the waggon; and they were scarcely calculated to move about the streets of London, which are described in a Paving Act of 1539 as "very foul, and full of pits and sloughs, very perilous and noyous, as well for the king's subjects on horseback as on foot, and with carriages." There appears little doubt that the coach first appeared about 1564; although the question was subsequently raised "whether the devil brought tobacco into England in a coach, or else brought a coach in a fog or mist of tobacco."* Stow thus describes the introduction of this novelty, which was to change the face of English society:

"In the year 1564, Guillian Boonen, a Dutchman, became the queen's coachman; and was the first that brought the use of coaches into England. After a while, divers great ladies, with as great jealousy of the queen's displeasure, made them coaches, and rid up and down the countries in them, to the great admiration of all the beholders; but then by little and little they grew usual among the nobility and others of sort, and within twenty years became a great trade of coach-making."

In little more than thirty years a Bill was brought into Parliament "to restrain the excessive use of coaches."

* Taylor.

One of the most signal examples we can find of the growing importance of the middle classes is exhibited in their rapid appropriation to their own use of the new luxury which the highest in the land ventured at first to indulge in, timidly, and with "jealousy" of the queen's displeasure. It was in vain that Parliament legislated against their "excessive use;" it was equally in vain that the citizens and citizens' wives who aspired to ride in them, were ridiculed by the wits and hooted by the mob. As in the diffusion of every other convenience or luxury introduced by the rich, the distinction of riding in a coach soon ceased to be a distinction. The proud Duke of Buckingham, seeing that coaches with two horses were used by all, and that the nobility had only the exclusive honour of four horses, set up a coach with six horses; and then "the stout Earl of Northumberland" established one with eight horses.* Massinger, in "The City Madam," exhibits Anne Frugal demanding of her courtly admirer—

"My caroch

Drawn by six Flanders mares, my coachman, groom,
Postillion, and footmen."

The high-born and the wealthy soon found that those who had been long accustomed to trudge through the miry streets, or on rare occasions to bestride an ambling nag, would make a ready way with money to appropriate the new luxury to

* See Wilson's Memoirs.

themselves. Coaches soon came to be hired. They were to be found in the suburban districts and in inns within the town. Taylor (he writes in 1623) says, "I have heard of a gentlewoman who sent her man to Smithfield from Charing Cross, to hire a coach to carry her to Whitehall; another did the like from Ludgate-hill, to be carried to see a play at the Blackfriars." He imputes this anxiety for the accommodation of a coach to the pride of the good people, and he was probably right. He gives us a ludicrous example of the extent of this passion in the case of "two leash of oyster-wives," who "hired a coach to carry them to the green-goose fair at Stratford-the-Bow; and as they were hurried betwixt Aldgate and Mile-end, they were so be-madam'd, be-mistress'd, and ladyfied by the beggars, that the foolish women began to swell with a proud supposition or imaginary greatness, and gave all their money to the mendicanting canters."* The rich visitors who came to London from the country were great employers of coaches; and Taylor tells us that the "Proclamation concerning the retiring of the gentry out of the city into their countries" somewhat "cleared the streets of these way-stopping whirligigs; for a man now might walk without bidding *Stand up, ho!* by a fellow that can scarcely either go or stand himself."† It is easy to conceive that in those days of ill-paved and narrow streets the coaches must have been a

* World runs on Wheels, p. 239.

† Id.

great impediment to the goings-on of London business. Our Water-Poet is alive to all these inconveniences: "Butchers cannot pass with their cattle for them; market folks, which bring provision of victuals to the city, are stopped, stayed, and hindered; carts or wains, with their necessary wares, are debarred and letted; the milk-maid's ware is often spilt in the dirt;" and then he describes how the proud mistresses, sitting in their "hell-cart" (Evelyn tells us this was the Londoner's name for a coach long after), ride grinning and deriding at the people "crowded and shrouded up against stalls and shops." D'Avenant, some forty or fifty years later, notices the popular feeling: "Master Londoner, be not so hot against coaches." But the coaches flourished, in spite of the populace. The carman might drive up against them, and the coachman, "with six nobles sitting together," might be compelled to "stop, and give place to as many barrels of beer."* They flourished, too, in spite of the roads. "It is a most uneasy kind of passage in coaches on the paved streets of London, wherein men and women are so tost, tumbled, jumbled, rumbled, and crossing of kennels, dunghills, and uneven ways."† It is affirmed in a pamphlet quoted by Markland, entitled "Coach and Sedan," that in 1636 the coaches "in London, the suburbs, and within four miles compass without, are reckoned to the number of six thousand and odd."

It was two years before the date of this calcula-

* D'Avenant.

† Taylor.

tion that the first hackney-coach *stand* was established in London. Garrard thus describes it in a letter to Strafford: "I cannot omit to mention any new thing that comes up amongst us though never so trivial: here is one Captain Baily, he hath been a sea captain, but now lives on the land, about this city, where he tries experiments. He hath erected, according to his ability, some four hackney-coaches, put his men in livery, and appointed them to stand at the May-pole in the Strand, giving them instructions at what rates to carry men into several parts of the town, where all day they may be had. Other hackney-men seeing this way, they flocked to the same place, and perform their journeys at the same rate. So that sometimes there is twenty of them together, which disperse up and down, that they and others are to be had everywhere, as watermen are to be had by the water-side. Everybody is much pleased with it. For, whereas before coaches could not be had but at great rates, now a man may have one *much cheaper*."*

Writing two months after, the same retailer of news says, "here is a proclamation coming forth about the reformation of Hackney-coaches, and ordering of other coaches about London. One thousand nine hundred was the number of hackney-coaches of London, base lean jades, unworthy to be seen in so brave a city, or to stand about a king's court." In 1635 he writes, "Here is a proclamation coming forth, to prohibit all hackney-coaches

* Strafford's Letters, vol. i. p. 227.

to pass up and down in London streets; out of town they may go at pleasure as heretofore." It is perfectly clear that the King might proclaim, and that his subjects would not hearken to him, as long as they found hackney-coaches essential to their business or pleasure. We have an amusing example of the inefficiency of such meddling, twenty-five years after. Pepys, in his Diary of 1660, writes, "Notwithstanding this is the first day of the King's proclamation against hackney-coaches coming into the streets to stand to be hired, yet I got one to carry me home." We think we hear his cunning chuckle as he hires the coach, and laughs at the law-makers.

When Prince Charles, afterwards Charles I., returned from his faithless wooing of the daughter of Philip IV., he brought with him three sedan-chairs of curious workmanship. Such a mode of conveyance was unknown to the English. They had seen the fair and the feeble carried in a box, supported by a horse before and a horse behind; and they felt, therefore, something like what we have felt at the sight of an election rabble harnessed to the wheels of a popular candidate—they felt that men were degraded, when the favourite of James and Charles, Buckingham, first moved into the streets of London, borne in his sedan on men's shoulders. "Baby Charles" had presented "Steeple" with two of these luxuries of foreign growth. Wilson says, "When Buckingham came to be carried in a chair upon men's shoulders, the

clamour and noise of it was so extravagant, that the people would rail on him in the streets, loathing that men should be brought to as servile a condition as horses." The very year of the expedition of Charles and Buckingham to Spain, 1623, was Massinger's 'Bondman' produced. Charles and the favourite returned to London early in October; the play was first acted on the 3rd of December. It contains these lines:—

" 'Tis a strong-limb'd knave:
My father bought him for my sister's litter.—
O pride of women! Coaches are too common;
They surfeit in the happiness of peace,
And ladies think they keep not state enough
If, for their pomp and ease, they are not borne
In triumph on men's shoulders."

Gilchrist and Gifford think that this was an allusion to Buckingham. If so, and there can be little doubt of the matter, the vain favourite must have paraded with his new luxury, "degrading Englishmen into slaves and beasts of burden" (as a writer of that day expresses himself), upon the instant of his return.

But the popular clamour was as ineffectual against the chairs as against the coaches. In 1634, Garrard, writing to Lord Strafford, says, "Here is also another project for carrying people up and down in close chairs, for the sole doing whereof Sir Sander Duncombe, a traveller, now a pensioner, hath obtained a patent from the King, and hath forty or fifty making ready for use." The

coachmen and the chairmen soon got up a pretty quarrel; and in 1636 we find published the amusing tract, entitled 'Coach and Sedan, pleasantly disputing for place and precedence.' The title exhibits to us the form of the sedan, with its bearers *touting* for custom—and we have a description of the conveyance and its men, which, with the engraving which accompanies it, clearly enough shows that the chairmen no longer bore the "litter" on their shoulders, palanquin-fashion, but that they quickly adopted the mode of carrying which lasted for two hundred years.

The revolutions of half-a-century made wonderful changes in the aspect of the Thames. The Restoration found the famous old theatres swept away, and the ancient mansions towards the east invaded by the traders. Wharfs took the place of trim gardens; and if the nobleman still kept his state-boat, the dirty coal-barge was anchored by its side. D'Avenant has given a description of this state of things, which he puts into the mouth of a Frenchman:—

"You would think me a malicious traveller if I should still gaze on your mis-shapen streets and take no notice of the beauty of your river; therefore I will pass the importunate noise of your watermen (who snatch at fares as if they were to catch prisoners, plying the gentry so uncivilly, as if they never had rowed any other passengers but bear-wards), and now step into one of your peascod-boats, whose tilts are not so sumptuous as the roofs

of *gondolas*, nor, when you are within, are you at the ease of *chaise à bras*. The commodity and trade of your river belongs to yourselves ; but give a stranger leave to share in the pleasure of it, which will hardly be in the prospect or freedom of air ; unless prospect, consisting of variety, be made up with here a palace, there a wood-yard, here a garden, there a brewhouse ; here dwells a lord, there a dyer, and between both *duomo comune*. If freedom of air be inferred in the liberty of the subject, where every private man hath authority, for his own profit, to smoke up a magistrate, then the air of your Thames is open enough, because 'tis equally free."*

It is easy to perceive that during the progress of these changes—all indicating the advance of the middle classes, and the general extension of public accommodation and individual comfort—the river was every day becoming less and less a general highway for passengers. The streets from Westminster to St. Paul's were paved after a fashion ; the foot-passenger could make his way, though with some danger and difficulty ; and the coach, though sometimes stuck in a hole, and sometimes rudely jostled by the brewer's cart, *did* progress through the Strand and Holborn. The time was approaching when the great capital would find out that one bridge was somewhat insufficient, and that ferries and wherries were uncer-

* Entertainment at Rutland House, D'Avenant's Works, 1673, p. 352.

tain and inconvenient modes of passage from one shore to another.

Howel, amongst his enumeration of the attractions of the city, says, "What variety of bowling-alleys there are!" And when the idler was tired of this sport, and would turn his back even upon shuffle-board and cock-fighting, he had nothing to do but to step down to Queenhithe or the Temple, and have an afternoon of such recreation as can now only be found at a distance of five miles from London Bridge. "Go to the river," continues Howel; "what a pleasure it is to go thereon in the summer-time, in boat or barge! or to go a floundering among the fishermen!" Conceive an angler, stuck under one of the piers of Waterloo Bridge, patiently expecting to be rewarded with a salmon, or at least a barbel. Yet such things were a century ago. There are minute regulations of the "Company of Free Fishermen" to be observed in the western parts of the Thames, which clearly show that the preservation of the fish, even in the highway between London and Westminster, was a matter of importance; and very stringent, therefore, are the restrictions against using eel-spears, and wheels, and "angle-rods with more than two hooks."* There is a distinct provision that fishermen were not to come nearer London Bridge than the Old Swan on the north bank, and St. Mary Overies on the south. Especially was enactment made that no person should "bend over any net,

* Stow's London, book v.

during the time of flood, whereby both *salmons*, and other kind of fish, may be hindered from swimming upwards." Woe for the anglers ! The *salmons* and the *swans* have both quitted the bills of mortality ; and they are gone where there are clear runnels, and pebbly bottoms, and quiet nooks under shadowing ozers, and where the water-lily spreads its broad leaf and its snowy flower, and the sewer empties not itself to pollute every tide, and the never-ceasing din of human life is heard not, and the paddle of the steam-boat dashes no wave upon the shore.

THE YOUNGER SON.

THE Lyffe of Sir Peter Carewe, late of Mohonese Otrey, in the countie of Devon, Knyghte, whoe dyed at Rosse, in Irelande, the 27th of November, 1575, was read to the Society of Antiquaries of London, November 29th, 1838. At that reading, the yawning must have been terrific—the sleep profound. This “Lyffe” — “collected by John Vowell, al’s Hoker, of the Cetie of Excester, Gent., partly upon the credyble reporte of others, and partly which he sawe and knewe hyme selffe” — occupies fifty-eight quarto pages of the twenty-eighth volume of the ‘Archæologia.’ The world might have remained profoundly ignorant of the doings of Sir Peter Carewe, but for the exhumation of this MS. of John Vowell; and in truth this “Lyffe” might have shared the common fate of antiquarian discoveries—a digging-up, and a re-interment—had there not been some lasting and general interest in the narrative. The early history of Peter Carewe is a remarkable example of ancient educational discipline. His story comes unbidden before us, when we think that “wisdom doth live with children round her knees”—loving, and beloved. What was the daily life of a child

in the days of Henry the Eighth? Shadow of Peter Carewe, instruct us !

About the year 1526, there is stir in the household of Thomas Hunte, draper, and Alderman of Exeter. Peter, a son of the worshipful Sir William Carewe, is expected to arrive, in charge of a faithful servant of the house, from Mohones Otrey. He is to lodge with Thomas Hunte, and daily to attend the grammar-school of the city. "Wife," says the alderman, "this is a heavy charge ; the boy, I am given to know, is pert and forward. He is the youngest son, and his father looks to his learning to bring him to some advancement. Sir William is a hard man. This is a heavy charge."

The boy comes on horseback, the servant having a leading rein, greatly to Peter's annoyance. They stop at the draper's threshold. It is a mean wooden house ; but well stocked with West of England stuffs. "Welcome, young sir," quoth the draper's wife. "I am commanded by Sir William," says the servant, "to require you to keep a close eye upon my young master. You are to stand in the place of his father, Master Hunte. He must have no rude companions : he must go straight from your house to the school, and from the school to your house. If he be truant, flog him !" With this solace was Peter Carewe confided to the alderman.

We see the shadow of poor Peter in the gram-

mar-school. One Freer is master ; he is counted to be a very hard and a cruel master. Daily is that unhappy boy lacerated ; no stripes can move him to learn. He sits doggedly with the open pages of "Syntaxis" before him ; but he will make no agreement between the nominative case and the verb. The noontide meal of Thomas Hunte is by him neglected ; he is off to the pleasant fields that lie around the city. He hath a book of ballads in his vest, which tells of the "actes and faits" of chivalry—of the knight's prowess, and the lady's love. Hunte in vain lectures—Freer in vain flogs. At last "he would never keep his school, but is daily truant, and always ranging." On a certain day good Thomas Hunte is seriously alarmed—the boy has been missing through a summer's morning, noon, and eve. The alderman hath sent abroad to seek him, and, as twilight approaches, goes forth himself. Behind a buttress of the city wall is Peter hiding. "Oh, varlet!" cries the furious draper, "have I caught you?" "Not yet," replies the truant. The boy climbs the wall—he looks out from the top of the highest turret: "Let me be! Keep down. If you press upon me, I will surely cast myself headlong over the wall, and then I shall break my neck ; and thou shalt be hanged, because thou makest me to leap down."

In a few days after, there is a strange sight in the streets of Exeter. Sir William Carewe has once more sat in the draper's best room. The boy

stands trembling before him. No word is spoken between father and son ; a servant is in the background, with a chain and a collar. "Bind him," is the one brief command. Through the streets of Exeter is the rebellious boy carried about, as one of his father's hounds ; "and they lead him home to Mohones Otrei like a dog." The degradation does not end when the boy enters the house of his ancestors in this bestial guise. Does the pitying mother intercede for her youngest child ? If she does—and we see a dim shadow of a lady kneeling before a silent husband—that intercession is bootless. Peter Carewe abides in a filthy outhouse, coupled to a hound.

Violent remedies must necessarily be brief. Peter Carewe and the hound part company. Another proof of the rebellious boy is to be made. He sits upon a form in St. Paul's School, but he is still "more desirous of liberty than of learning ;" and "do the schoolmaster what he would, he in no wise can frame the young Peter to smell to a book, or to like of any schooling." The father again comes to town. The sensible schoolmaster persuades him to put his son to some active employ. In Paul's Walk is Sir William musing ; the boy standing in awe behind him. Sir William there meets with an old friend, then serving in the French court. This friend offers to take the boy for a page, and use him like a gentleman, and do as much for him as if he were his own child. The offer is accepted. The father is rid of his trouble-

some son—the son is freed from the terror of his father.

Peter Carewe is for some time caressed by his new friend. He has gay clothes—feeds well—partakes of courtly exercises. And yet Peter is ill at ease. He is little suited for routine duties. He sinks, gradually from the hall to the stable. His fine apparel is worn and spent. His master will provide him no more. He becomes “a mullet, to attend his master’s mules, and so in the order of a mullet did attend and serve his master. Howbeit, the young boy, having by these means some liberty, is contented with his estate.” Oh, Peter! we see thy shadow, as thou art roystering with thy brother mullets—learning their uncourtly language, treasuring up their low experiences, but at length doing something useful. Thou hast work to do, and thou dost it. Thy real education is beginning. Thou hast hours of leisure, and then thou learnest many a virelay, and art merry in the dance; and thou readest for delight, and not at another’s command—thou readest Froissart and Comines;—gradually thou lookest back with shame on thy past obduracy. We see thy shadow weeping, for thou art thinking of thy mother.

There is a gentleman come with letters of commendation from Henry VIII. to Francis I., and he is received of the French King, and has a charge of horse given him. It is John Carewe, of Haccombe, a kinsman to Sir William Carewe. He is riding

to the court, and, coming before the court-gate, where there are sundry lackeys and horse-boys playing together, he hears a boy call out, "Carewe Angloys! Carewe Angloys!"—"Which is Carewe Angloys?" says John Carewe, of Haccombe. Come forth, our Peter! Thou art evil apparelled, thy clothes are all to-ragged and very simple, the stains of the stable are upon thee. Who art thou? "I am the youngest son of Sir William Carewe, of Devon, Knight. My name is Peter. I offended my father, who sent me here to be a page. My master was not pleased with me, and I am now a poor muleter."—"Thou injured boy, I will be to thee as a father."

Peter Carewe is now a willing scholar. Kindness, which opened his heart, has fashioned his intellect. His kinsman and the bold boy have no break in their affections. They march together in the army which Francis I. sends against Charles V. On the march, John Carewe dies; but Peter is not desolate. He has made friends. The Marquis of Saluces takes him into his company. At the siege of Pavia, Francis I. is taken prisoner, the Marquis is slain, the French army is scattered. In his rough career, Peter has attained that practical wisdom which the school of Exeter might have failed to teach him. He has learnt to act for himself. He goes boldly to the Emperor's camp; and becomes a favourite with the Prince of Orange. The boy that was coupled with a hound is grown into a young man, "so honest in his conditions, so

courteous in his behaviour, so forward in all honest exercises, and especially in all prowess and virtue, that he has stolen the hearts and gained the love of all persons unto him, and especially of the Princess."

A few years pass on, and Peter Carewe is in England. He has come with letters from the Princess of Orange to the Court of Henry VIII. He is taken at once into favour ; for young Carewe "has not only the French tongue, which is as natural to him as his own English tongue, but he is very witty, and full of life." And so, he is—first a henchman, and then one of the Privy Chamber. But Peter has natural longings, which hard usage has not extinguished. He asks permission to make a journey ; and he sets forth with a goodly company of attendants.

Sir William and Lady Carewe are sitting alone, in a parlour of their manor-house of Mohones Otrey. There is a trampling of horse without. In a few minutes the door is opened, and a gentleman, dressed in all the costly luxury of the period, and surrounded with the gayest of followers, falls upon his knees. "My father, my mother, your blessing !" He holds out a letter. Sir William is dumb with surprise ; he with difficulty whispers to his wife, "It is Peter Carewe !"—"No—no—my poor Peter is dead and forlorn." "Mother, father, it is indeed your Peter !"

Thus leave we the shadow of Peter Carewe. Of his after worth and greatness let the record of

Master Vowell suffice. He did creditable things on land and at sea. The latter chivalry produced many such heroes. His shadow never comes before us in its panoply of loyalty and valour. But we have seen him, in an idle hour, as he is described by his biographer:—"The King himself being much delighted to sing, and Sir Peter Carewe having a pleasant voice, the King would very often use him to sing with him certain songs they call *fremen* * songs, as namely, 'By the bank as I lay,' and 'As I walked the wood so wild.'"

* Quære—*threemen*? The 'three-man-song' of 'The Winter's Tale.'

HANG OUT YOUR LIGHTS.

It was on the vigil of St. John the Baptist, in the year 1510, that two young men wearing the dress of the King's Guard—the rich and picturesque uniform which has survived the changes of three centuries, to linger about the court of England, and preserve its gorgeous dignity, however vulgarised into associations with beef-eaters and showmen—that two handsome and soldierly-looking young men came to the water-gate at Westminster, and, in answer to the “Eastward-ho” of the watermen, jumped into a common wherry. There were not many boats at the stairs, and those which were still unhired were very different in their appearance and their comforts from the royal barges which were moored at some little distance. The companions looked at each other with a peculiar expression before they sat down on the uncushioned and dirty bench of the wherry; but the boisterous laugh which burst forth from one of them appeared to remove all scruples, and the boat was soon adrift in the ebbing tide.

The evening was very lovely. The last sunbeam was dancing on the waters, and the golden light upon the spires of the city was fast fading away. Suddenly, however, a redder light came up out of

the depths of the street, and wreaths of grey smoke mingled with the glare. The Thames was crowded with boats, and voices of merriment were heard amidst the distant sounds of drum and trumpet. The common stairs or bridges were thronged with people landing. The wherry in which sate the two guardsmen ran in to a private stair at Bridewell ; and, with the same hearty laugh, they stepped into a spacious garden. "Charles," said the more boisterous of the companions, "this will be a snug nest for the right witty Almoner when Empson's head is off." In a few minutes a noble-looking person, dressed in a sober but costly suit, like a wealthy citizen, joined them, making a profound reverence. "No ceremony," exclaimed he of the loud voice ; and then, making an effort to speak low, "His Highness is safe in the palace, and we are two of his faithful guards who would see the Midsummer-watch set. Have you a dagger under your russet-coat, my good Almoner ? for the watch, they say, does not fear the rogues any more than the gallows." It was Wolsey, then upon the lower rounds of the ladder of preferment, who answered Henry in the gay tone of his master. Brandon, who, in spite of his generous nature, did not quite like the accommodating churchman, was scarcely so familiar with him. The three, however, all gaily enough passed onward through the spacious gardens of Empson's deserted palace, which covered the ground now known as Dorset Street and Salisbury Square ; and, with a master-key, with which the prosperous Al-

moner was already provided, they sallied forth into the public street, and, crossing Fleet Bridge, pursued their way towards West Cheap.*

Ludgate was not closed. In the open space under the city-wall was an enormous bonfire, which was reflected from the magnificent steeple of Paul's. Looking up the hill there was another bonfire in the open space before the cathedral, which threw its deep light upon every pinnacle of the vast edifice, and gleamed in its many windows as if a thousand tapers were blazing within its choir and transepts. The street was full of light. Over the doorways of the houses were "lamps of glass, with oil burning in them all the night;" and "some hung out branches of iron, curiously wrought, containing hundreds of lamps lighted at once."† Before the houses were tables set out, on which were placed ponderous cakes and flagons of ale and wine, "unexercised by lungs;" and the sturdy apprentices, who by day were wont to cry "What lack ye?" threw open their blue cloaks, disclosing their white hose, with a knowing look of independence, as they courteously invited the passer-by to partake of their dainties. Over the doors hung the delicate

* "On Midsummer-Eve, at night, King Henry came privily into West Cheap, of London, being clothed in one of the coats of his guard."—(Stow's 'Annals' under date 1510.) It is not likely that Henry, though bold enough, would so far yield to the impulses which belong to a youth of nineteen as to go alone. Brandon had been his companion from childhood; Wolsey had already learned to minister to his pleasures as one mode of governing him. The patent by which the great churchman obtained Empson's house is dated 1510.

† Stow's Survey.

branches of the graceful birch, with wreaths of lilies and St.-John's-wort; and there were suspended pots of the green orpine, in the bending of whose leaves the maiden could read her fate in love. Wending their way through the throng, the three men of the west felt, the two younger especially, something of that pleasure which human beings can scarcely avoid feeling at the sight of happiness in others. Henry whispered to Wolsey, "This is a merry land;" and the courtier answered, "You have made it so."

The three visitors of the city moved slowly along with the dense crowd towards the Cross in West Cheap. They there stationed themselves. The liveries which two of them wore would have secured them respect, if their lofty bearing had not appeared to command it. The galleries of the houses and the windows were filled with ladies. Between the high gabled roofs stood venturous boys and servants. Tapestry floated from the walls. Within was ever and anon heard the cadence of many voices singing in harmony. Then came a loud sound of trumpets; and a greater light than that of the flickering bon-fires was seen in the distance, and the windows became more crowded, and the songs ceased within the dwellings.

The procession which was approaching was magnificent enough to afford the highest gratification to one at least of the three spectators that we have described. It suggested, however, the consideration that it did not belong to himself, and threw no

particular glory round his throne and person. But, nevertheless, his curiosity was greatly stimulated ; and that love of pomp which he had already begun to indulge, in processions, and jousts, and tournaments, could not fail of receiving some delight from the remarkable scene that was before him. He was, as Cavendish has described him, "a young, lusty, and courageous prince, entering into the flower of pleasant youth." His amusements were manly and intellectual, "exercising himself daily in shooting, singing, dancing, wrestling, casting of the bar, playing at the recorders, flute, virginals, and in setting of songs and making of ballads." * The future sensual tyrant is not readily seen in this description. But here, on Midsummer-Eve, in 1510, was Henry standing beside the cross in West Cheap, and mixing unknown amongst his subjects, like the Haroon el-Rasheed of the 'Thousand and One Nights.' Onward came the Marching Watch, winding into Cheap from the little conduit by Paul's Gate. Here, literally,

"The front of Heaven was full of fiery shapes,
Of burning cressets."

The pitchy ropes borne aloft in iron frames sent up their tongues of fire and wreaths of smoke in volumes which showed, afar off, like the light of a burning city. Stow tells us that for the "furniture" of the Marching Watch there were appointed seven hundred cressets ; besides which every constable, amounting to two hundred and forty, had

* Hall.

his cresset. Each cresset had a man to bear it and another to serve it, so that the cresset train amounted in number to almost two thousand men. This was, indeed, civic pomp upon a splendid scale. A poet of the next century, whose name is almost unknown in the ordinary catalogues of English poetry, but who has written with more elegance and taste than half of those we call classics—Richard Niccols, in a performance called ‘London’s Artillery,’ has the following very beautiful lines descriptive of the bonfires and cresset-lights of the great festival of the Summer Solstice:—

“The wakeful shepherd by his flock in field,
With wonder at that time far off beheld
The wanton shine of thy triumphant fires
Playing upon the tops of thy tall spires.”

Mingled with the cresset-bearers came on two thousand men of the Marching Watch, some mounted and some on foot. There were “demilances” on great horses; gunners with their harquebuses and wheel-locks; archers in white coats, with bows bent and sheafs of arrows by their sides; pike-men in bright corslets; and bill-men with aprons of mail. Following these came the constables of the Watch, each in bright harness gleaming from beneath his scarlet jorinet* and his golden chain, with his henchman following him, and his minstrel before him, and his cresset-light by his side; and then came the waits of the city, and morris-dancers footing it to their merry notes;

* Probably scarf.

and then, in due order, the mayor himself on horse-back, and his sword-bearer, his henchmen, his harnessed footmen, his giants, and his pageants. "The Sheriffs' Watches," says Stow, "came one after the other in like order, but not so large in number as the Mayor's." Niccols, still apostrophising London, thus describes this part of the solemnity:—

"Thy goodly buildings, that till then did hide
 Their rich array, open'd their windows wide,
 Where kings, great peers, and many a noble dame,
 Whose bright, pearl-glittering robes did mock the flame
 Of the night's burning lights, did sit to see
 How every senator, in his degree,
 Adorn'd with shining gold and purple weeds,
 And stately mounted on rich-trapped steeds,
 Their guard attending, through the streets did ride
 Before their foot-bands, grac'd with glittering pride
 Of rich gilt arms."

Onward swept the mighty cavalcade past the Cross at Cheap, along Cornhill, and by Leadenhall to Aldgate. It was to return by Fenchurch Street and Gracious Street, and again into Cornhill and through Cheapside. The multitude thronged after it, but the three strangers remained almost alone. "This costs gold," said Wolsey. "And it is worth the cost," replied the king. "Would they fight," said Brandon, "these demilances and archers?" "Indeed they would," said Wolsey: and turning round to the king, "such men have fought with your Highness's grandsires; and the cry of *Clubs* of the blue-cloaks is as fearful a rallying-cry as that of *St. George*." "Come," said the king, "we

must homeward. Are the streets watched, or shall we have to knock a knave or two on the pate?" The streets were watched. They again passed Ludgate; and as they descended Fleet Hill they found the lamps still burning before the doors, but the hospitable tables were almost deserted. At due intervals stood a constable in bright harness, surrounded by his footmen and his cresset-bearer; and as they went onward through Fleet Street, and looked to the right and left, up the narrow lanes, there was still the cresset gleaming on the armour. "We are safe to-night," said the king. "This is a glorious affair, and I shall bring her Highness to see it on St. Peter's Eve. How looks the city, my grave Almoner, on other than festival nights?" "It is a melancholy place, your Highness. After curfew not a light to be seen: the one cresset in a street makes it more gloomy; and masterless men cut purses in the dark, while the light-bearer tells the rogues where there is no watch." "Ha!" exclaimed the king. "This should be remedied," added the statesman. "The cost of one Midsummer-Eve would double the watch for the rest of the year." "Ho," said Harry, "hang up the thieves, and let the true men keep in their houses." "They break into the houses," said Wolsey. "We will tell our justices to spare none of them," replied the king. They were by this time at Temple Bar. There were three led-horses waiting, and a dozen foot men with lighted torches. Slowly they rode, for the way was rough, past St. Clement's, and

through the Strand, and by Charing Cross to the palace gates. Here and there was seen a solitary bonfire, but there was no rush of population as in the city. The large palatial houses were dark and silent. The river, which ever and anon lay spread before them as they looked upon it through the broad open spaces of its bank, was red with the reflection of the city fires. The courtier-priest was at his master's stirrup as he alighted ; and Henry whispered, "Come to me to-morrow. Our people want Empson's head, and the sooner you get his house the better." With a loud laugh his Highness and Brandon vanished into an inner court of the palace, and the Almoner rode thoughtfully to his lodgings.

During the reign of Henry VIII., as Harrison tells us, he hung up, of great thieves, of petty thieves, and rogues, three score and twelve thousand. This was a wholesale mode of dispensing with a preventive police, though we doubt whether the prison and the gallows were cheaper than lighting and watching. The same graphic pen, writing in 1586, adds :—"He seemed for a while greatly to have terrified the rest ; but since his death the number of them is so increased, that, except some better order be taken, or the law already made be better executed, such as dwell in uplandish towns and little villages shall live but in small safety and rest."* London, we have no doubt, had a pretty equal share of discomfort and danger.

* Description of England, book ii. chap. 11.

The time was passed when it could be enjoined, as by the statute of Edward I., "that none be so hardy as to be found going or wandering about the streets of the city after curfew tolled at St. Martin's-le-Grand with sword or buckler or other arms for doing mischief, or whereof evil suspicion might arise, nor in any other manner, unless he be a great man or other lawful person of good repute, or their certain messengers, having their warrants to go from one to another, with lanthorn in hand." The progress of industry had rendered it necessary that others besides great men and their accredited messengers should go about at night, and not be considered as malefactors. Thirty years after the Midsummer-Eve of 1510, Henry VIII. put down the marching watch, "considering the great charges of the citizens:" but the good old lovers of pageantry would not so readily part with it, and it was several times attempted to be revived, till, in 1569, it was altogether abandoned; and it was determined "in the room thereof to have a substantial standing watch for the safety and preservation of the city."* It is curious, in these our own days of police and gas-lights, to look back to the means by which the safety and preservation of the city were secured. The watchman had gradually been transformed from a sturdy constable in harness into a venerable personage bearing halberd and lanthorn. He had to deal with deaf listeners, and he therefore proclaimed with a voice of command, "Lanthorn!"

* Stow's Survey.

But a lantern alone was a body without a soul, and he therefore demanded "*a whole candle.*" To this the vital spark was to be given, and he continued to exclaim, "light." To render the mandate less individually oppressive, he went on to cry, "Hang out your lights!" And that even the sleepers might sleep no more, he ended with "Hear!"

'Lantern, and a whole candle light !
Hang out your lights ! Hear !'

We are told by the chroniclers that, as early as 1416, the Mayor, Sir Henry Barton, ordered lanterns and lights to be hanged out on the winter evenings betwixt Allhallows and Candlemas. For three centuries this practice subsisted, constantly evaded, no doubt, through the avarice and poverty of individuals, sometimes probably disused altogether, but still the custom of London up to the time of Queen Anne. The cry of the watchman, "Hang out your lights," was an exhortation to the negligent, which probably they answered only by snores ; equally indifferent to their own safety and the public preservation. A worthy mayor in the time of Queen Mary provided the watchman with a bell, with which instrument he accompanied the music of his voice down to the days of the Commonwealth. The "Statutes of the Streets," in the time of Elizabeth, were careful enough for the preservation of silence in some things. They prescribed that "no man shall blow any horn in the

night, or whistle after the hour of nine of the clock in the night, under pain of imprisonment ;” and what was a harder thing to keep, they also forbade a man to make any “ sudden outcry in the still of the night, as making any affray, or beating his wife.” Yet a privileged man was to go about knocking at doors and ringing his alarum—an intolerable nuisance if he did what he was ordered to do. But the watchmen were, no doubt, wise in their generation. With honest Dogberry they could not “ see how sleeping should offend ;” and after the watch was set, they probably agreed to “ go sit upon the church-bench till two, and then all to-bed.” Dekker, however, describes the bellman as a person of some activity—“ the child of darkness ; a common night-walker ; a man that had no man to wait upon him, but only a dog ; one that was a disordered person, and at midnight would beat at men’s doors, bidding them (in mere mockery) to look to their candles when they themselves were in their dead sleeps.” Stow says that in Queen Mary’s day one of each ward “ began to go all night with a bell, and at every lane’s end, and at the ward’s end, gave warning of fire and candle, and to help the poor, and pray for the dead.” This is the more poetical bellman of Milton’s ‘ Il Penseroso :’—

“ Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom ;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth ;

Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm."

Herrick, also, has given us the verses of the bellman of poetry, in one of the charming morsels of his 'Hesperides':—

" From noise of scare-fires rest ye free,
From murders, Benelicite;
From all mischances that may fright
Your pleasing slumbers in the night,
Mercy secure ye all, and keep
The goblins from ye while ye sleep.
Past one o'clock, and almost two;
My masters all, 'Good day to you!'"

But, with or without a bell, the real prosaic watchman continued to make the same demand as his predecessors for lights, through a long series of years; and his demand tells us plainly that London was a city without lamps. But though he was a prosaic person, he had his own verses. He addressed himself to the "maids." He exhorted them to make their lanthorns "clear and bright." He told them how long their candles were expected to burn. And finally, like a considerate lawgiver, he gave a reason for his edict. In a print, which is of the time of James I., we have a watchman represented, with the following lines underwritten:—

" A light here, maids! hang out your light,
And see your horns be clear and bright,
That so your candle clear may shine,
Continuing from six till nine;
That honest men that walk along
May see to pass safe without wrong."

The making of lanthorns was a great trade in the early times. We clung to King Alfred's invention for the preservation of light with as reverend a love, during many centuries, as we bestowed upon his civil institutions. The horn of the favoured utensil was a very dense medium for illumination, but science had substituted nothing better; and even when progressing people carried about a neat glass instrument with a brilliant reflector, the watchman held to his ponderous and murky relic of the past, making "night hideous" with his voice, while he made "darkness visible" with his lanthorn. But, as we see, in the early days of lanthorns, when the cresset was being superseded by "Hang out your lights," there was a wonderful demand for these commodities, and upon the maids and their mistresses, who were nightly appealed to for the provision of the external light that was to protect the ward from thieves and murderers, must have rested a very serious responsibility of keeping "horns clear and bright," and securing the candle against "chinks," either made by "time" or bad manufacturers.

Paris was in the same condition as London for a long period. The nightly passengers through the streets walked about with lanthorns; and it was only in times of alarm and imminent danger that ordinances were issued, commanding each occupier of a house to place a light in the window of his first floor. La Reinie, the first lieutenant-general of police, introduced public lanthorns in 1667.

This was hailed as a great event, for a medal was struck upon the occasion, bearing the legend *Urbis securitas et nitor*. One lanthorn, lighted with candles, in the middle of each street, and one at each end, constituted the amount of the security and splendour which Louis XIV. and his minister of police bestowed upon the Parisians. We cannot exactly say whether Boileau had composed his sixteenth Satire before this event, but about this period he describes the darkest wood as far less dangerous than the streets of Paris, in which the "lured traveller" would encounter four bandits as he turned a corner :—

"Le bois le plus funeste et le moins fréquenté
Est au prix de Paris un lieu de sûreté,
Malheur donc à celui qu'une affaire imprévue
Engage un peu trop tard au détour d'une rue :
Bientôt quatre bandits, lui serrant les côtés,
La bourse ———"

London was perhaps better off, with its general system of private lights, however imperfect that system might be. In 1694, a licence was granted by the corporation to certain persons "concerned and interested in glass-lights, commonly called or known by the name of convex lights," for the sole supply of the public lights in all public places in the city, for twenty-one years. Here, one would have thought, would have been the prosperous commencement of a system which would really have ensured safety to the inhabitants of London. But when the lease was expired, we hear no more of

the glass-lights or convex-lights ; and every house-keeper whose house fronts any street or lane, and is of the rent of ten pounds, and every person having the charge of a public building, are each required and obliged, in every dark night, from the twenty-ninth of September until the twenty-fifth day of March, to hang out one or more lanthorn or lanthorns, with sufficient cotton-wick candles lighted therein, and to continue the same burning in every such dark night, from the hour of six until the hour of eleven of the same night. The act of Common Council which makes these provisions, tells us they are "for securing the houses against robbers and thieves, for the prevention of murder, and the conveniency of passengers." Glorious provisions, indeed, were they for accomplishing those ends ! When there were clouds over the moon,—and whole streets and portions of streets were without light, because the inhabitants were not rated at ten pounds—and there was no light at all after eleven o'clock, we must admire the sagacity of the civic authorities, who thus proposed to put down robbery and murder. Defoe, who, in many things, was a century before his age, published a pamphlet in 1729, wherein he suggested a plan "by which our streets will be so *strongly guarded*, and so *gloriously illuminated*, that any part of London will be as safe and pleasant at midnight, as at noonday, and burglary totally impracticable." London continued to be *strongly guarded* by its "ancient and most quiet

watchmen," for another hundred years; and the authorities began to think of rendering the streets *illuminated* "with a convenient and sufficient number of glass-lamps," not until they had gone up in terror to George II., to implore "a speedy, rigorous, and exemplary execution of the laws upon the persons of offenders." There was small difference in social arrangements between the old days of "Hang out your lights," and those semi-modern days when society, pretending to be in the most civilised condition, was really going backwards in many of the essential matters that constitute the "salt of life."

EVIL MAY-DAY.

THERE was fear and trouble in London on the eve of May-day, in the ninth year of King Henry the Eighth.

The sun was setting as John Rest, the Mayor, hurried into the Guildhall, where the Aldermen, and the Recorder, and the Sheriffs had been suddenly assembled. He spake to them with a tremulous voice, saying that he had just come from the great Cardinal, at York House, who had told him, of his own sure knowledge, that it was the intention of the young and riotous people to rise and distress the strangers; and that the Cardinal had bid him go home, and wisely foresee that matter.

Then uprose a worshipful man, and said, that the grievances of the citizens were very great, and that the blood of the apprentices might be stirred to avenge their masters. "For," said he, "did I not hear Dr. Bell preach, on Easter Tuesday, and set forth how the aliens and strangers eat the bread from the poor fatherless children, and take the living from all the artificers, and the intercourse from all the merchants?" And then another worshipful man arose, and declared how he had heard John Lincoln, the broker, hold forth to a great crowd at the Porch of St. Mary, Spital, that the

English merchants could have no utterance ; for the merchant strangers bring in all silks, cloth of gold, wine, iron, and such other merchandise that no man, almost, buys of an Englishman ; and carry outward so much English tin, wool, and lead, that Englishmen that adventure outward can have no living. And then the worshipful assembly, with one or two exceptions, joined in the outcry against the merchant strangers, and especially against those who dealt in foreign nails, locks, baskets, cupboards, stools, tables, chests, and girdles ; which, if they were wrought here, Englishmen might have some work and living.

Thus the guardians of the king's peace began to murmur, and clamour as bitterly as Dr. Bell or John Lincoln ; and some were for doing nothing, and some were for calling out the watch, if the riot should take place, and the aliens should be slain.

But amidst these heats stood up the Under Sheriff Master Thomas More ; and there was instant silence.

"Good, my masters," said he, "our business is to prevent a riot, not redress a grievance : and, moreover, I think the grievance, such as it be, is not to be redressed either by noise or staff-striking. If the stranger exchanges his wine and oil for our wool and tin, he gives us what we want in return for what he wants ; and God's gifts are not hidden in a corner. If the alien sells baskets, and girdles, and painted cloths, why is it that you can't sell the

same work of your own hands? Because your workmanship is less skilful. We must amend ourselves before we blame the stranger for our poverty. My counsel is, that you all go to your own homes; lock up your apprentices till to-morrow's matins; exhort them to peacefulness; and we will bring in the May with our old jollity, and the shaft of St. Andrew shall be set up to the old song of 'Mighty Flora, goddess of fresh flowers.'"

The council was broken up: and in all haste each alderman sent round his ward, that no man should stir out of his house after nine of the clock, and every one should keep his doors shut, and his servants within till seven of the morning. But the command was a fruitless one. There was in Chepe, as was the wont on May Even, a company of young men playing at bucklers—the good old English game which we now call single-stick. The moon was struggling with light clouds; but the young men went on with their play, for there was a bonfire in the street, and they were heedless or ignorant of the alderman's command. Paul's clock struck nine, and they were still at play. Then rushed into the midst of them the Worshipful Sir John Mondey, Alderman of Chepe; and he cried with a mighty voice, "Stop!"

But the young men did not stop. And louder called the alderman; and faster and more furious was the play. And then the serjeants of the ward rushed in upon the young men to take them to the Counter. Then arose that cry which the Blue-

cloaks had so often raised to the terror of their masters, and "Clubs! Clubs!" was echoed through Chepe and Cornhill; and in a short space the streets were filled. The buckler-play ceased; the alderman had fled. The materials of mischief were at hand. The spark burst into a flame when the cry went forth—"Down with the Lombards!"

It was long after midnight when the riot had ceased. At a house called Greengate, near Leadenhall, dwelt a calender of worsted, a native of Picardy, whose home was a great resort of foreigners; and the furious people rifled his house and destroyed his workshops. In Blanchechapelon, in Aldgate, dwelt stranger cordwainers; the people threw the boots and shoes into the streets, but they could not find the workmen, for they had fled for their lives. In Newgate there were imprisoned some artificers for molesting the strangers; the gaol was broken and the prisoners released. The demon of mischief was at last satisfied.

The first beam of the May morning was lighting the cross of the great spire of Paul's, and yet a crowd lingered in the gray dawn. They gathered, as they had gathered under happier auspices, before the church of St. Andrew Undershaft. There, in an open space, near where now stands the India House, lay a mighty shaft, from which the church derived its name. It was 'the Great Shaft of Cornhill,' famous under that name in the days of Chaucer—the wondrous May-pole, which, being set up with all revelry of song and morris-dance on

May morning, stood higher than the church-steeple. The wearied and excited crowd rushed to their less dangerous work with renewed strength. The shaft was reared, and then went up a shout, which would have awakened the heaviest sleeper in Aldgate—if any were asleep on that morning, when the rites of May were done with such evil observance. There was not only the shout of riot, but the boom of war. The lieutenant of the Tower discharged his ordnance against the city, and the civic power had been raised, and men in harness came in great force against the rioters, who had dwindled down to some three hundred apprentices. The great shaft of St. Andrew soon looked down upon Cornhill in solitude and silence; the apprentices were hurried to the Tower.

There stood in the shade of the adjoining shambles two men observing this scene. As the watch stopped and questioned them, one of the two gave a countersign, and the watch passed on. The street was at length perfectly tranquil.

“Sebastian,” said the man of authority, “I came in a lucky hour to your rescue.”

The other replied in English, but with a foreign accent, “Master More, I am grateful. It is hard that I should be molested in my secret chamber, poring over my charts at midnight, and planning how I could carry your nation’s ships by the shortest cut to the New World. Yes, Master More, it is hard; you have saved my life, but my papers are destroyed.”

"And yet these people," said the sheriff, "are to be pitied even in their fury. I could have stopped them, if that dull alderman had not come in with his watch and ward. I said to them, 'Ye are breaking the laws; some of ye will be hanged, others banished. Silly apprentices, when ye are cast upon a strange land with nothing but your craft to give ye bread, how would ye like the foreigner to maltreat you, as ye would maltreat these aliens?' An Englishman, Master Sebastian Cabot, is fierce as his country's mastiff; the kind voice may subdue him, when the rough hand is lifted in vain. But come; this gear is mended, and I must bestow you in my lodgings."

As the two friends quietly walked from Cornhill to the Temple, they discoursed much, in spite of the late fear and fatigue.

"Sebastian," said More, "methinks it is some twenty years, as you have often told me, since you first saw the American continent from the prow of your father's ship. You saw that continent a year before Columbus."

"In the same year of 1497," replied Cabot, "Vasco di Gama sailed from the Tagus on his first voyage to India."

"Mighty events," said More, "that will change the face of the world. And here—with the wealth of these countries at the command of enterprise and labour—we are fighting in our streets because a few aliens bear away the poor payments for skill and industry. Master Cabot, I think I see God's

hand in these revelations of distant empires, of which the wisest of antiquity never dreamed."

"I am a blunt sailor, Master More," said Cabot, "tossed on the rough Adriatic, a boy before the mast—a Bristol mariner when my father adopted England for his country. I love that country, though its people be sometimes rude and jealous. You have let the Spaniard seize upon the empire of the Pacific. Be it yours to command the shores of the Atlantic. It shall go hard if I do not find you the North-West passage."

"Sebastian," said More, "a man like you is worth a legion of conquerors. The world will be civilised by commerce, and not by arms."

"The trinkets," said Cabot, "that we exchanged twenty years ago with the savages of Prima Vista,* have given them new desires which are the spurs to new industry."

"Will the time ever arrive," interrupted More, "when those regions, now the hunting grounds of a few starving tribes, shall be peopled by Europeans? You tell me of a country of forests and lakes. Will there be ships on those waters, and towns in those woods? Shall our seamen go fearlessly across the ocean which divides us, and give the handiworks of our looms for the native products of the New Land? That time is a long way off."

"But it will come," replied Cabot, "if Governments do not retard it. Henry the Seventh bar-

* The name by which the Cabots designated the first spot they saw of the North American continent.

gained with my father that, out of the profits of every voyage, he, the king, should receive a fifth in merchandise or money. The practice is not likely to grow rusty."

"Well, well, my friend," said More, "we will talk further of these things. But now the sun is up, so a merry May-morning to you. Come in."

Four days after the Shaft of St. Andrew had been set up, there was a fearful tragedy enacted in London. There came into the city the Duke of Norfolk, with fourteen hundred men in harness; and they stood in the streets, and spake opprobrious words to the citizens; and, according to the chronicler, "Proclamations were made that no women should come together to babble and talk, but that all men should keep their wives in their houses,"—so remorseless is military discipline. And the duke kept the "oyer and determiner." The buckler-play on May Even cost the lives of fifteen unhappy wretches, of whom the most were apprentices. What was done with the rest, the old chronicler, Hall, shall relate:—

"Thursday, the twenty-second day of May, the King came into Westminster Hall, for whom, at the upper end, was set a cloth of estate, and the place hanged with arras: with him was the Cardinal, the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, the Earls of Shrewsbury, of Essex, of Wiltshire, and of Surrey with many lords and others of the King's council. The Mayor and Aldermen, and all the chief of the

city, were there, in their best livery (according as the Cardinal had them appointed), by nine of the clock. Then the King commanded that all the prisoners should be brought forth. Then came in the poor younglings and old false knaves, bounden in ropes, all along, one after another, in their shirts, and every one a halter about his neck, to the number of four hundred men and eleven women. And when all were come before the King's presence, the Cardinal sore laid to the Mayor and Commonalty their negligence, and to the prisoners he declared that they had deserved death for their offence. Then all the prisoners together cried, 'Mercy, gracious lord—mercy!' Then the lords altogether besought his Grace of mercy; at whose request the King pardoned them all. And then the Cardinal gave unto them a good exhortation, to the great gladness of the hearers; and when the general pardon was pronounced, all the prisoners shouted at once, and altogether cast up their halters into the hall roof, so that the King might perceive they were none of the discreetest sort."

And so the first of May, in the year 1517, was ever after called EVIL MAY-DAY.

The apprentices' tragedy long threw a gloom over the May-games of London. No king and queen, with lords and ladies, rode a-maying to Greenwich; no company of tall yeomen, clothed all in green, bade welcome to the woods; no Robin Hood and his followers escorted the court to arbours made of boughs, decked with flowers, and fur-

nished with the more substantial attractions of wine and venison ; no citizens in every parish had their several mayings, and fetched in may-poles with pastime all the day long. Honest old Stow almost weeps over this falling off. The punishment of Evil May-day lasted through several generations. The great Shaft of St. Andrew was ignobly laid along under the pentices of Shaft Alley ; and there it rotted on iron hooks for two-and-thirty years. Even that inglorious repose was at last denied to it. The Reformation came ; and one Sir Stephen, curate of St. Katharine's, preaching from an elm-tree in St. Paul's churchyard, denounced the unhappy shaft as an idol ; and away went his hearers that very Sunday, and "after they had well dined, to make themselves strong," as Stow gravely records, raised the shaft from the hooks, sawed it in pieces, and divided the logs amongst them.

COUNTRY WAYFARERS.

THOSE who are not tolerably familiar with the Memoir Literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, will have some difficulty to comprehend how our ancestors moved about from place to place, and carried on the business of communication with distant inland parts. The mode of conveyance was so universal, and so established, that it rarely offers itself to any especial notice. Till the beginning of the eighteenth century we were almost wholly an EQUESTRIAN people. Harrison describes "the excellent paces" of our saddle-horses as peculiar to those of our soil ; and says, that "our countrymen, seeking their ease in every corner where it is to be had, delight very much in this quality." All the records of early pageantry tell us of the magnificence of horsemen. Froissart saw the coronation of Henry IV., and he thus describes the progress of the triumphant Bolingbroke through the city. "After dinner the duke departed from the Tower to Westminster, and rode all the way bareheaded ; and about his neck the livery of France. He was accompanied with the prince his son, and six dukes, six earls, and eighteen barons, and in all, knights and squires, nine hundred horse. Then the king had on a short coat of cloth of gold, after the manner of Almayne, and he was

mounted on a white courser, and the garter on his left leg. Thus the duke rode through London with a great number of lords, every lord's servant in their master's livery; all the burgesses and Lombard merchants in London, and every craft with their livery and device. Thus he was conveyed to Westminster. He was in number *six thousand horse.*" The old English chroniclers revel in these descriptions. They paint for us, in the most vivid colours, the entry into London of the conqueror of Agincourt; they are most circumstantial in their relations of the welcome of his unhappy son, after the boy had been crowned at Paris, with the king riding amidst flowing conduits, and artificial trees and flowers, and virgins making "heavenly melody," and bishops "in pontificalibus;" and having made his oblations at the cathedral, "he took again his steed at the west door of Paul's and so rode forth to Westminster." By the ancient "order of crowning the kings and queens of England," it is prescribed that, "the day before the coronation, the king should come from the Tower of London to his palace at Westminster, through the midst of the city, mounted on a horse, handsomely habited, and bare-headed, in the sight of all the people." The citizens were familiar with these splendid equestrian processions, from the earliest times to the era of coaches; and they hung their wooden houses with gay tapestry, and their wives and daughters sate in their most costly dresses in the balconies, and shouts rent the air,

and they forgot for a short time that there was little security for life or property against the despot of the hour. They played at these pageants, as they still play, upon a smaller scale, themselves ; and the Lord Mayor's horse and henchmen were seen on all solemn occasions of marching-watches and Bartholomew fairs. The city dignitaries seldom ride now ; although each new sheriff has a horse-block presented to him at his inauguration, that he may climb into the saddle as beseems his gravity. The courtiers kept to their riding processions, down almost to the days of the great civil war ; perhaps as a sort of faint shadow of the chivalry that was gone. Garrard tells us, in 1635, how the Duke of Northumberland rode to his installation as a knight of the garter at Windsor, with earls, and marquises, and almost all the young nobility, and many barons, and a competent number of the gentry, near a hundred horse in all. The era of coaches and chairs was then arrived ; but the Duke of Northumberland did not hold that they belonged to knighthood. Fifty years earlier coaches were shunned as "effeminate." Aubrey, in his short memoir of Sir Philip Sidney, describes the feeling about coaches in the days of Elizabeth : "I have heard Dr. Pell say that he has been told by ancient gentlemen of those days of Sir Philip, so famous for men-at-arms, that 'twas then held as great a disgrace for a young gentleman to be seen riding in the streets in a coach, as it would now for such a one to be seen in the streets in a petticoat and

waistcoat ; so much is the fashion of the times now altered." Roger North has left us a curious record of the equestrian ambition of a Lord Chancellor—Shaftesbury—in 1672 :

"His lordship had an early fancy, or rather freak, the first day of the term (when all the officers of the law, king's counsel, and judges, used to wait upon the great seal to Westminster Hall), to make this procession on horseback, as in old time the way was, when coaches were not so rife. And accordingly, the judges, etc., were spoken to, to get horses, as they and all the rest did, by borrowing and hiring, and so equipped themselves with black foot-cloths in the best manner they could ; and divers of the nobility, as usual, in compliment and honour to a new lord-chancellor, attended also in their equipments. Upon notice in town of this cavalcade, all the show-company took their places at windows and balconies, with the foot-guards in the street, to partake of the fine sight ; and being once well settled for the march, it moved, as the design was, statelily along. But, when they came to straights and interruptions, for want of gravity in the beasts, and too much in the riders, there happened some curvetting, which made no small disorder. Judge Twisden, to his great affright, and the consternation of his grave brethren, was laid along in the dirt. But all at length arrived safe, without loss of life or limb in the service. This accident was enough to divert the like frolic for the future, and the very

next term after, they fell to their coaches as before." *

Nor was the use of saddle-horses confined to men in the early days. Chaucer thus describes his 'Wife of Bath :—

" Upon an ambler easily she sat,
Ywimpled well, and on her head a hat,
As broad as is a buckler or a targe,
A foot-mantle about her hippes large,
And on her feet a pair of spurres sharp."

When Katharine of Spain came over in 1501 to marry Prince Arthur, a horse was provided for her conveyance from the Tower to St. Paul's, upon which she was to ride "with the *pillion* behind a lord to be named by the king ;" but it was also ordered that "eleven *palfreys* in one suit be ordained for such ladies attending upon the said princess as shall follow next unto the said pillion." The great ladies long after this rode on horseback on ordinary occasions. Elizabeth commissioned Sir Thomas Gresham to purchase a horse at Antwerp ; and the merchant-prince writes to Cecil in 1560 :—"the Queen's Majesty's Turkey horse doth begin to mend in his feet and body ; which doubtless is one of the readiest horses that is in all Christendom, and the best." Of poor Mary of Scotland, the Earl of Shrewsbury, after conveying her to Buxton, writes to Cecil in 1580 :—"She had a hard beginning of her journey ; for when she should have taken her horse, he started aside, and therewith she

* Examen, p. 57.

fell, and hurt her back, which she still complains of, notwithstanding she applies the bath once or twice a day." The "horse-litter" appears to have formed a connecting link between the saddle and the coach.

Luxury had its appliances ready for the almost exclusive mode of equestrian travel. "A lover of his country," who, in 1673, saw that coaches would be the ruin of the kingdom, says, "Before these coaches were set up, travellers rode on horseback; and men had boots, spurs, saddles, bridles, saddle-cloths, and good riding suits. . . . Most gentlemen, before they travelled in their coaches, used to ride with swords, belts, pistols, holsters, portmantaus, and hat-cases; for when they rode on horseback they rode in one suit, and carried another to wear when they came to their journey's end, or lay by the way. . . . And if they were women that travelled, they needed to have safeguards and hoods, side-saddles, and pillions, with strappings, saddle or pillion-cloths, which, for the most part, were either laced or embroidered." The saving of much of this expenditure, by travelling in coaches, the writer holds, is the ruin of trade. "For, formerly, every man that had occasion to travel many journeys yearly, or to ride up and down, kept horses for himself and his servants, and seldom rid without one or two men." In 1526, the Earl of Cumberland rode from Skipton to London, with thirty-three servants.* In 1582, the Earl of Shrewsbury writes to a dependant: "I think my company will be twenty gentlemen and twenty

* Whitaker's Craven.

yeomen, besides their men and my horse-keepers. I think to set forwards about the 11th of September, from Wingfield to Leicester, to my bed, and to make but four days' journey to London." * In 1640, the wife of the last Earl of Cumberland rode from London to Londesborough, having thirty-two horses in her train ; and the journey occupied eleven days. These slow progresses were the relics of the old times of sumpter-horses, when princes and nobles travelled with vast cavalcades, like an oriental caravan. We must not imagine that all equestrian travelling was at this slow rate. " Ride for your life—haste, haste, post-haste!"—were the commands of ambitious peers and crafty ministers in the days of Elizabeth, to the unhappy courier who was to post from London to Edinburgh. Onward he went, through miry ways and over trackless commons,—sometimes dashing up to his saddle-bows through a ford swollen by mountain rains—sometimes bewildered in the mists of the trackless moorlands. As he approaches the borders new terrors await him. He rides in the dim morning twilight, with his ears alive to every sound. He fancies that the tread of horses and of cattle is at hand. He dares not hide himself, for he would be mistaken for a spy. He rides boldly on into the troop of marchers who are returning from their foray ; and, to his surprise, is permitted to escape, after he has been saluted with a few words of opprobrium, and a snatch of the ballad of Johnnie Armstrong. At last he reaches " Edina, Scotia's

* .Lodge's Illustrations.

'darling seat," after a perilous journey of five days. His dispatches are brought forth from their hiding-place ;—the great men meet and deliberate ;—and after a tarrying of a day or two, the express has to face again the same rough road.

James I. of England was nearly five weeks on his padded saddle, in his royal progress from Edinburgh to London ; but Sir Robert Carey, determining to be the first to tell James that he was king of England, stole out of Richmond Palace, at three o'clock of the morning of Thursday, the 24th of March, and reached Edinburgh on the night of Saturday, the 26th, the king having gone to bed by the time he had knocked at the gate. This ride of four hundred miles, in seventy hours, gives one an elevated notion of the travelling accommodations of two centuries and a half ago. But it must be borne in mind that such instances were the exceptions to the rule of slow travelling. Although the Post was not established by law, there were post-masters, at the end of the sixteenth century, on all the great lines of roads ; and, for a sufficient consideration, they would furnish such a traveller as Sir Robert Carey with abundant horses, that he might ride till they dropped,—as, indeed, he records one of his horses to have done. Then, again, although the roads were bad, the equestrian had many a mile of the smooth turf of an unenclosed country to gallop over. Let it not be forgotten, that if Sir Robert Carey rode from London to Edinburgh at the rate of six miles an hour, keeping on night and day,

with relays of horses, the general communication of the country was so slow, that although Elizabeth died at two o'clock of the morning of Thursday, the 24th of March, and James was proclaimed king, at London, on the same morning, "yet the news of it reached not the city of York until Sunday, March the 27th." *

The days before the Post were days when those who left their houses, for distant parts of England, were more separated from their friends than the North American emigrant of our own times. The transmission of intelligence across the Atlantic is now an easier thing than the old conveyance of a letter two hundred miles, upon a cross-road. The historian of Craven, speaking of 1609, says, "At this time the communication between the North of England and the universities was kept up by carriers, who pursued their tedious but uniform route with whole trains of packhorses. To their care were consigned not only the packages, but frequently the persons, of young scholars. It was through their medium, also, that epistolary correspondence was managed; and as they always visited London, a letter could scarcely be exchanged between Yorkshire and Oxford in less time than a month." Charles I. seems, in 1635, to have resolved to remedy this evil by the establishment of the home post-office. In his proclamation of that year, he says that there had been no certain intercourse between England and Scotland; and he therefore commands a running post to be esta-

* Continuation of Stow's Annals.

blished between London and Edinburgh, to go thither and come back again in six days ; and for other roads there are promised the same advantages. In 1660 the General Post-office was established by Act of Parliament ; and all letters were to be sent through this office, "except such letters as shall be sent by coaches, common known carriers of goods by carts, waggons, and pack-horses, and shall be carried along with their carts, waggons, and pack-horses respectively." The Post-master General and his deputies, under this statute, and no other person or persons, "shall provide and prepare horses and furniture to let to hire unto all thorough posts and persons riding in post, by commission or without, to and from all and every the places of England, Scotland, and Ireland, where any post-roads are." We find, by various clauses of this Act, that the post-master was also to furnish a guide with a horn to such as ride post,—that he was to furnish horses within half an hour after demand,—and that if he could not accomplish this, persons might hire a horse where they could, and sue the post-master for a penalty. The country post-master was an ancient functionary, who had long been in the habit of attending to the wants of those who bore letters inscribed, "Haste, haste, post haste." He was generally an inn-keeper. Taylor, the water poet, in his 'Penniless Pilgrimage' from London to Scotland, in 1618, has described one that might rival any Boniface on record ; "From Stamford, the next

day, we rode to Huntingdon, where we lodged at the post-master's house, at the sign of the Crown ; his name is Riggs. He was informed who I was, and wherefore I undertook this my penniless progress ; wherefore he came up to our chamber, and supped with us, and very bountifully called for three quarts of wine and sugar, and four jugs of beer. He did drink and begin healths like a horse-leech, and swallowed down his cups without feeling, as if he had had the dropsy, or nine pound of sponge in his maw. In a word, as he is a post, he drank post, striving and calling by all means to make the reckoning great, or to make us men of great reckoning. But in his payment he was tired like a jade, leaving the gentleman that was with me to discharge the terrible shot, or else one of my horses must have lain in pawn for his superfluous calling and unmannerly intrusion."

The CARRIERS of England have always been a *progressive* body, in more than one sense of the word. They were amongst the first in our days to see what railways would accomplish for the transit of goods and passengers. They were the first, more than two centuries ago, to change the mode of passenger-conveyance from the riding-horse to the waggon. They brought the Oxford scholars, as we have seen, out of the North with their pack-horses. The most famous of all the old carriers was he of Cambridge of whom Milton wrote,

" Here lies old Hobson ; death hath broke his girt,
And here, alas ! hath laid him in the dirt."

He it was that gave rise to the saying of "Hobson's choice;" for he obliged his customers for hackney-horses to take the one that stood next the stable-door. His trade of horse-letting was a refinement upon the old trade of the post-master: he intrusted a horse to the Cambridge scholar for a pleasure ride, and he sent no guide to feed the horse and bring it back. He was a pack-horse carrier. It was not till after his palmy days that the innovation of waggons came in, in which passengers were carried from city to city. But long did the passenger-waggon and the pack-horse continue to travel in good fellowship. Roderick Random tried both conveyances: "There is no such convenience as a waggon in this country (Scotland), and my finances were too weak to support the expense of hiring a horse. I determined, therefore, to set out with the carriers, who transport goods from one place to another on horseback; and this scheme I accordingly put in execution on the 1st day of November, 1739, sitting upon a pack-saddle between two baskets, one of which contained my goods in a knapsack. But by the time we arrived at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, I was so fatigued with the tediousness of the carriage, and benumbed with the coldness of the weather, that I resolved to travel the rest of my journey on foot, rather than proceed in such a disagreeable manner." We of this age complain that the penny-a-mile passengers in covered railway carriages, which only go some fifteen miles an hour, are hardly used. Let us contrast this case

with that of the pack-horse traveller. Seated in the throne which Roderick Random occupied, he sallied forth at "four by the day," when the horses were "packed;" forgetting, for a little while, the uneasiness of his seat, by the remembrance how he had been "stung like a tench." He is stuck in the midst of a file of fifty horses, a large companionship for safety. For a little while he is on the king's highway, and the bells go cheerily as he crosses some pleasant common. Perchance, as he ascends the wide moorlands, the clouds darken around him, the mist falls heavily, the carriers can see no track; but by an unerring instinct the cautiously stepping horses keep their file, and ask no better guide than the sound of their sagacious leader's bells. He will not lead them into boggy places; he will keep steady, even when man has ceased to direct him. If the way is unusually rough, the old and feeble horses lag behind; but they never break the order of their march, and they ultimately push on, even if they should die in their perseverance. In Bewick's 'History of Quadrupeds' is an interesting anecdote of a pack-horse, thus exerting himself to maintain his place, dropping down dead when he reached the inn-yard. The inexperienced passenger must have needed some courage in these passages across the semi-deserts of uncultivated England. But soon he is in a lane some four feet wide,—sometimes floundering in the mud—at other times slipping upon a paved causeway, with a thick sludge on either side of the narrow track. In the

hills of Derbyshire have we ridden the sure-footed pony of the country down these winding roads, shut out from the wide prospect around us by overhanging hedges—a privation which the pack-horse traveller little cared for. But not only in Derbyshire, in the days before men sought the picturesque, were such roads travelled over, but in the very thickest of our metropolitan suburb. Hagbush-lane, which was described by William Hone about twenty-five years ago, but which has now vanished, was the ancient bridle or pack-horse road from London to the North, and extended by the Holloway back road, as far as the City-road, near Old Street. “Some parts of Hagbush-lane,” says Hone, “are much lower than the meadows on either side.” At one time a terraced ridge, at another a deep rut, the pack-horse road must have been to the unaccustomed traveller a somewhat perilous pass. Happy would he be when the house which promised “good entertainment for man and horse,” and which, in the early days of English art, hung out a representation of the animal he bestrode, which might be mistaken for a dromedary,—happy would he be when the “watering-time” arrived. Well-earned would be the rest. Again would the cavalcade be in movement “till dewy eve,”—again would come the rasher and eggs for supper, with the black jack of home-brewed ale; again the sound sleep, in spite of night plagues; and again the early morning journey. A fortnight between York and London would be a quick passage. Well,

there might be worse arrangements for a contemplative traveller ; but for ourselves, being somewhat fearless of innovations, we must avow a preference for the Express-train.

Our antiquarian annalist, Stow, records that, in 1605, LONG WAGGONS for passengers and commodities travelled to London from Canterbury and other large towns. According to this authority, they were known as early as 1564. "The lover of his country," whom we have already quoted, has no violent objection to these "long waggon coaches," as he calls them. They plead some antiquity ; "they were first set up." Moreover, they are not guilty of the sin of expedition. Compared with the objects of his hatred, the stage-coaches, they are innocent things : "They travel not such long journeys, go not out so early in the morning, neither come in so late at night ; but stay by the way, travel easily, without jolting men's bodies, or hurrying them along, as the running coaches do." These convenient creeping things had a safe existence for a century or two, and bore up bravely against the sneers of the "flying-coaches," that went four miles an hour. Roderick Random, as we have said, tried both the pack-horse and the waggon. This waggon was "the long waggon" of Stow ; the "long waggon-coach" of "the lover of his country." Not much more than a hundred years ago, there was a vehicle moving on the Great North Road, in which passengers, who assumed to be gentlefolks, were travelling from York to London, at the fare of a shilling

a-day,—not being more than a fortnight in the transit. The description which Smollett gives of his ride to London is known to have been derived from his own experience. He and his faithful friend, Strap, having observed the waggon a quarter of a mile before them, speedily overtook it; and ascending the convenience by a ladder, tumbled into the straw, under the darkness of the tilt, amidst four passengers, two gentlemen, and two very genteel specimens of the fair sex. When they arrived at the inn where they were to lodge for the night, Captain Weazel and his lady desired a room for themselves, and a separate supper; but the impartial inn-keeper replied, that “he had prepared victuals for the passengers in the waggon, without respect of persons.” Roderick agrees to give ten shillings for his passage to London, provided Strap, who was to trudge by the side, should change places with him when he was disposed to walk. The mistakes, the quarrels, and the mirth of the passengers, are told by the novelist with a vivacity which would be admirable without its coarseness. They got tolerably reconciled to each other after the first five days’ rumbling in the straw. “Nothing remarkable happened during the remaining part of our journey, which continued six or seven days longer. At length we entered the great city, and lodged all night at the inn where the waggon put up.”

Let not the “long stage-waggon,” which thus kept alive a monthly communication between Yorkshire and London, and carried, according to Smol-

lett, no less dignified persons than a medical student, an ensign in a marching regiment, and a City money-lender, be confounded with the broad-wheeled waggon that, after being half drowned by the waters of the canal, has now been swept from the surface of the earth by the fire of the railroad. Have we not ourselves heard the merry bells of the team, breasting their way right in the centre of the broad Bath road, unyielding to coach or curricule? Have we not seen the bright eye glancing from the opening of the tilt behind, as the ponderous wain is moving beside the village green, and the stalwart driver tells the anxious maiden that it is only one more mile to the turnpike where she is to meet "the young man?" Have we not sat beneath the branching elm which fronts some little inn where waggons congregate, and heard much goodly talk about the dearness of horses, and the craft of Lunnun? They are gone,—these once-familiar scenes:

" They live no longer in the faith of reason ;"

but they will live for ever in such pictures as that our friend Creswick has painted of 'The London Road a hundred years ago.'

We have abundant evidence that STAGE-COACHES were in use soon after the middle of the seventeenth century. In 1663, Mr. Edward Parker, writing to his father, who lived near Preston, says: "I got to London on Saturday last. My journey was noways pleasant, being forced to ride in the boot all the way.

The company that came up with me were persons of great quality, as knights and ladies. My journey's expense was thirty shillings. This travel hath so indisposed me, that I am resolved never to ride up again in the coach."* Let us turn aside for a moment, to explain what "the boot" was. There were two boots to these old coaches—uncovered projections from each side of the carriage. Taylor, the Water Poet, thus describes them: "It [the coach] wears two boots, and no spurs, sometimes having two pair of legs in one boot; and oftentimes, against nature, most preposterously, it makes fair ladies wear the boot. Moreover, it makes people imitate sea-crabs, in being drawn sideways, as they are when they sit in the boot of the coach." In this boot, then, travelled unhappy Edward Parker. He does not tell us the rate at which he travelled. We will supply that information from other sources.

From the Diary of Sir William Dugdale, it appears that in 1659 he set forward to London in the Coventry coach, on the 2nd of May, and arrived on the 4th of May—three days. The Diary of a Yorkshire clergyman † shows that in the winter of 1682, a journey from Nottingham to London in a stage-coach occupied four whole days. In Antony à Wood's Diary, we are told, that in 1667 he travelled from Oxford to London in the coach, and was two days in accomplishing the passage. A few years after, the feat was performed in thirteen hours; but in

* *Archæologia*, vol. xx.

† Quoted in *Archæologia*, vol. xx.

1692 it was again found necessary to give two days to the journey, from Michaelmas to Lady-day. "The lover of his country," however, has furnished us the most complete picture of coach travelling, in 1673. The long journeys were from London to Exeter, Chester, or York. On these roads the fare was forty shillings in summer, and forty-five shillings in winter, each way. The coachman was changed four times, and the passenger was expected to give each coachman a shilling at the end of the stage, besides a total of three shillings for drink to the coachmen at their halting places. In summer, the time occupied in riding was four days—in winter six days. But these were long days. The complaining writer says: "What advantage is it to men's health to be called out of their beds into these coaches an hour before day in the morning, to be *hurried* in them from place to place, till one hour, two, or three, within night; insomuch that, after sitting all day—in the summer time stifled with heat and choked with dust, or in the winter time starving and freezing with cold or choked with filthy fogs—they are often brought into their inns by torch-light, when it is too late to sit up to get a supper; and next morning they are forced into the coach so early that they can get no breakfast?" Added to these troubles, the fault-finder alleges the grievances of crying children, and crowds of boxes and bundles. He gives us some notion of the roads and the safety of the carriages: "Is it for a man's health to travel with tired jades, to be laid fast in the foul ways,

and forced to wade up to the knees in mire ; afterwards sit in the cold till teams of horses can be sent to pull the coach out ? Is it for their health to travel in rotten coaches, and to have their tackle, or perch, or axletree broken, and then to wait three or four hours, sometimes half a day, to have them mended, and then to travel all night to make good their stage ?” This is a queer state of things, a little exaggerated, perhaps, but in the main true. It is remarkable how long the roads and the coaches continued to be execrable.

The express train of the Great Western Railway goes to Exeter, a hundred and ninety-three miles, in four hours and a half. In 1725, the stage-coach journey from London to Exeter occupied four summer days. The passengers were aroused every morning at two o'clock, left their inn at three, dined at ten o'clock, and finished their day's labour at three in the afternoon.* In 1739, Mr. Andrew Thompson, of Glasgow, with a friend, left Glasgow to ride to London. There was no turnpike road till they came to Grantham, within a hundred and ten miles of the metropolis. Up to that point they travelled on a narrow causeway, with an unmade soft road on each side. As strings of pack-horses met them from time to time, they were obliged to plunge into the side road, and had often difficulty in scrambling again upon the causeway.† As late as 1763, there was only a coach once a month from Edinburgh to London, which

* Mrs. Manley's Journey.

† Cleland's Glasgow. :

was twelve or fourteen days on the road. In the south of England we made more rapid strides to perfection. We have before us a very curious bill of the 'Alton and Farnham Machine,' dated 1750, which is headed with an engraving, furnishing the best representation of the coach of a century ago that we have seen. The clumsy vehicle carries no passengers on the roof; but it has a large basket—literally a basket—swung behind, for half-price passengers. The coachman has four horses in hand, and a postillion rides a pair of leaders. This is truly a magnificent equipage, and it accomplished its journey in a marvellously short time, starting at six in the morning, and arriving duly the same night. This journey of forty-seven miles in one day was a feat; and well might the vehicle which accomplished it be dignified by the name of "Machine." The name became common; and hence stage-coach horses were called "Machiners."

Of the travelling by private carriages in those days of the most villainous cross-roads we have abundant evidence. The Duke of Somerset, who died in 1748, was always compelled by the badness of the roads to sleep at Guildford, on his way from Petworth to London. A letter of one of the Duke's servants to another servant, announces his master's intention to arrive at Petworth, from London; and adds directions, that "the keepers and others who knew the holes and sloughs, must come to meet his Grace, with lanthorns and long poles, to help him on his way." The grandfather of the present

Duke of Buckingham had an inn built for his special accommodation at Winslow, as the journey from Stowe to London could not be accomplished in one day. Vanbrugh, in the '*Provoked Husband*,' has given us an amusing, and, we have little doubt, faithful account of the progress of a Yorkshire family to town in their own equipage. According to the honest record of John Moody, their serving man, there was "Nothing but mischief! Some devil's trick or other plagued us, aw th' day long! Crack goes one thing; Bawnce! goes another. Woa, says Roger—Then souse! we are all set fast in a slough. Whaw! cries Miss!—scream go the maids! and bawl! just as thof' they were stuck! And so, mercy on us! this was the trade from morning to night."

From the days of the first turnpike a whole century appears to have passed before any very great improvements were effected in the roads, or in the vehicles travelling upon them. Mr. M'Culloch says, "It was not till after the peace of Paris, in 1763, that turnpike roads began to be extended to all parts of the kingdom; and that the means of internal communication began, in consequence, to be signally improved."* Mr. Porter, in an article contributed to '*The Companion to the Almanac*,' 1837, speaks of the condition of a road only thirty-six miles from London, about the same period:—"A gentleman now living at Horsham, in Sussex, has stated, on the authority of a person whose father

* Account of the British Empire.

carried on the business of a butcher in that town, that in his time the only means of reaching London was either by going on foot or on horseback, the latter method not being practicable at all periods of the year, nor in every state of the weather ; and that the roads were never at that time in such a condition as to admit of sheep or cattle being driven upon them to the London markets ; for which reason the farmers were prevented sending thither the produce of their lands, the immediate neighbourhood being, in fact, their only market. Under these circumstances the quarter of a fat ox was commonly sold for about fifteen shillings, and the price of mutton was one penny farthing per pound." Mr. Porter, in his 'Progress of the Nation,' also informs us, that "when it was in contemplation to extend turnpike-roads from the metropolis to more distant points than those to which they had before been carried, the farmers in the metropolitan counties petitioned Parliament against the plan, fearing lest their market being invaded by so many competitors, who would sell their produce more cheaply, they should be ruined." Two centuries before these wise farmers, William Harrison—in many things a shrewd observer—thought it would be good "if it were enacted that each one should keep his next market with his grain, and not to run six, eight, ten, fourteen, or twenty miles from home to sell his corn, where he doth find the highest price." Harrison saw clearly enough that communication equalised prices ; although he would have kept

down prices, and therefore kept down all profitable employment, by narrowing the market of the producers. Dr. Johnson appears to have had somewhat similar notions of public advantage. In 1784 he visited Mr. Windham, who made a note of his conversations, amongst which we find the following: "Opinion about the effect of turnpike roads. Every place communicating with each other. Before, there were cheap places and dear places. Now, all refuges are destroyed for elegant or genteel poverty. Disunion of families, by furnishing a market to each man's ability, and destroying the dependence of one man upon another." To have "cheap places and dear places"—to maintain "the dependence of one man upon another"—has been the struggle of class interests up to this hour. Roads and railroads and steamboats have annihilated the one remnant of feudality, local cheapness purchased by general dearness; and the penny-a-mile trains would extinguish all that is unhealthy in "the dependence of one man upon another," if the other remnant of feudality, the law of parish settlement, were broken up.

The extension of turnpike-roads through the country at last brought about the ultimate perfection of coach-travelling,—THE MAIL. More than sixty years ago was this great engine of our civilization first set in motion. Before Mr. Palmer suggested his improvements to the Government, letters sent by the post, which left Bath on Monday night, were not delivered in London till Wednesday afternoon.

The London post of Monday night did not reach Worcester, Birmingham, or Norwich, till Wednesday morning, and Exeter on the Thursday morning. A letter from London to Glasgow, before 1788, was five days on the road. The letter-bags were carried by boys on horseback; and the robbery of the mail was, of course, so common an occurrence, that no safety whatever could be secured in the transmission of money. The highwayman was the great hero of the travelling of that day. But on the 2nd of August, 1784, the first mail-coach left London for Bristol; and from that evening, till the general establishment of the railway system, the mail was one of the wonders and glories of our country.

The stage-coaches followed the mails in the course of improvement. We remember them when they were not very particular about the pace; and four hours from Windsor to London was pretty well. To be sure, there was a quarter of an hour for breakfast at Longford, and another quarter of an hour for luncheon at Turnham-green; but it was a pleasant ride in days when men were not in a hurry. The pace of our now surviving stage-coaches is, for the first half-hour after the railway, a sort of impertinence. You feel you are crawling when you have mounted the ten-mile-an-hour tortoise that is to take you across the country from the station; but yet the driver presumes to talk of his cattle. Look at him. He has a load of responsibility put upon him which he is little able to bear. He *must* keep time. He dares not have a snack at the

halfway-house ; he has no messages to deliver ; he sticks gloomily upon the box, while the horses are hurriedly changed ; he sleeps not at nights without dreaming of the whistle ; he is dependent upon an absolute will ; he has a cadaverous melancholy face, as if Time were beating him prematurely. Contrast him with Washington Irving's English coachman of 1820 :—" He has commonly a broad full face, curiously mottled with red, as if the blood had been forced by hard feeding into every vessel of the skin ; he is swelled into jolly dimensions by frequent potations of malt liquors, and his bulk is still further increased by a multiplicity of coats, in which he is buried like a cauliflower, the upper one reaching to his heels. He wears a broad-brimmed low-crowned hat ; a huge roll of coloured handkerchief about his neck, knowingly knotted and tucked in at the bosom ; and has in summer-time a large bouquet of flowers in his button-hole, — the present, most probably, of some enamoured country lass. His waistcoat is commonly of some bright colour, striped ; and his small-clothes extend far below the knees, to meet a pair of jockey-boots which reach about half-way up his legs." The portrait belongs to the archæology of England. A sedan, a hackney-coach, and a stuffed stage-coachman of the fat times, should be deposited in the rooms of the Antiquarian Society, while a specimen can be preserved in relic, or made out from description.

PHILIP SIDNEY AND FULKE GREVILLE.

THERE has been high revelry in Shrewsbury in 1569. Sir Henry Sidney, Lord President of the Council of the Marches, has made his annual visit, during an interval in his government of Ireland, in which he had returned to his favourite Ludlow Castle. Philip Sidney, his son, is a boy of fifteen, at the Free Grammar School of Shrewsbury. In the same form—of the same age—is his devoted friend, Fulke Greville. The ceremonies are over. Sir Henry has sate in the ancient hall of the Council House, to hear complaints and to dispense justice. He has gone in solemn procession to St. Chad's Church, with bailiffs, and aldermen, and wardens of companies. He has banquetted with the masters of the school in the great library. He has been present at a stage-play in the Guildhall—the Mayor's play. But more welcome than all the pomp of office is a quiet hour with his boy Philip, as they sit in the cool of a May morning on the terrace of the Council House, and look over the bright Severn towards Haughmond Hill, and muse in silence, as they gaze upon one of those unrivalled combinations of natural beauty and careful cultivation, which have been the glory of England during many ages of comparative freedom and security. It is the last of Philip's school years. He is to pro-

ceed to Oxford. His friend Greville afterwards wrote of him :—"I lived with him and knew him from a child, yet I never knew him other than a man, with such staidness of mind, lovely and familiar gravity, as carried grace and reverence above greater years." Proud is the father of his noble son. He is "the light of his family." They talk as friend to friend. The father—a statesman and soldier—is not displeased to see that, beneath the gravity of the precocious boy, are fiery glances of feeling almost approaching to rashness. They become one who in after years exclaimed, "I am a Dudley in blood—the duke's daughter's son."

The Lord President has departed. There is holiday at the school ; and Sidney and Greville walk forth to the fields in that spring-time. Shrewsbury is a place in which the young Sidney lives in the memories of the past. Few of the public buildings and private houses of the town are of the more recent Tudor architecture. The Market Square and Pride Hill are rich in the black oaken timbers, and gabled roofs, and pannelled carvings of the fifteenth century. The deserted Abbey is not yet in ruins. The Castle has a character of crumbling strength. The High Cross is perfect. There, were beheaded the last of the British Princes of Wales ; and there, suffered some who had the misfortune not to fall with Hotspur in the battle of Hateley Field. At the Augustine Friars, and the Grey Friars, are still seen the graves of many who had perished in that fight. The Welsh Bridge, with its "great gate to

enter into by the town, and at the other end, towards Wales, a mighty strong tower, to prohibit enemies to enter into the bridge" (as described by old Leland), has its associations of border hostilities. Sidney's mind is formed to luxuriate in the poetry of history.

The young men take their course into the country by the Castle Foregate. They are in earnest talk.

"What a monster these players make of Richard the Third," says Sidney. "Maugre my loyal reverence for her Highness's grand-father, I have a liking for the venomous little Yorkist. Even the players couldn't show him as a coward."

"Not when they make him whimper about revenge, suns, moons, and planets; silly lambs and croaking ravens—all crying for revenge upon him? Heavens! what stuff!"

"Rare stuff! How is it that these play writers cannot make their people talk like Englishmen and Christians? When the board is up—'Bosworth Field'—and two armies fly in, represented by four swords and bucklers—and the usurper dashes about, despite his wounds,—hear how he wastes his precious time. Do you remember?"

"Yes, yes—

"'Fly, my lord, and save your life.'

'I have it—'

'Fly, villain! look I as though I would fly?
No, first shall this dull and senseless ball of earth
Receive my body cold and void of sense.

You watery heavens scowl on my gloomy day,
And darksome clouds close up my cheerful sound.—
Down is thy sun, Richard, never to shine again,—
The bird whose feathers should adorn my head
Hovers aloft and never comes in sight.’

There’s a Richard for you.”

“Bravo, Philip! You should join a fellowship of players. You would beat the varlet with the hump that mouthed it on Tuesday. But why so hard upon the rhetoric of the vagabonds? Your favourite Gorboduc is full of such trash!”

“Yes, and faulty even as this True tragedy of Richard the Third, in time and place. In two hours of the Mayor’s play, we had Shore’s wife in Cheapside, and poor dead Richard about to be drawn through Leicester on a collier’s horse.”

“Suppose there were painted scenes, as some of the playhouses have, instead of the door painted in great letters—couldn’t the imagination go from Cheapside to Leicester in spite of Aristotle? and can’t it, even with the help of the painted board? But here we are at Battlefield.”

“I never walk over these meadows,” exclaimed Sidney, “without deep emotion. I was reading Hall just before my father came. How graphic these chroniclers are, compared with the ranting players.”

“What you read, I read, Philip.”

“As we walked through the Eastgate, I could not but think of that day when Henry came with his host into Shrewsbury, and being advertised that

the earls were at hand with banners displayed and battles ranged, marched suddenly out by the East-gate, and there encamped."

"An evening of parley and defiance, followed by a bloody morning."

"The next day, in the morning early, which was the vigil of Mary Magdalene, the king set his battle in good order—and so his enemies. There, on that gentle rise, Greville, must the rebel hosts have been arrayed. Then suddenly the trumpets blew. The cry of St. George went up on the King's part—and that cry was answered by Esperancé Percy. By Heaven, the tale moves me like the old song of Percy and Douglas!"

"Here is a theme for the players. Write the tragedy of Hotspur, Philip."

"Nonsense. What could I do with it, even if I were a maker. The story begins with the deposition of Richard. It is an epic, and not a tragedy. And yet, Fulke, when I see the effect these acted histories produce upon the people, I am tempted, in spite of Aristotle, to wish that some real poet would take in hand our country's annals. The teaching of our day is taking that form. The Players are the successors of the Bards."

"What a character is that young Harry of Monmouth—the profligate and the hero! Something might be made of these contending elements."

"Yes, the players would do it bravely. How they would make him swagger and bully—strike the chief justice, and slaughter the Welshmen.

Harry of Monmouth was a gentleman, and the players could not touch him."

"If the stage is to teach the people, surely right teachers will arise. Look at our preachers. They stir the dull clowns and the sleepy burgesses with passionate eloquence, and yet they preach as scholars. They never lower themselves to their audiences. And why should the stage be the low thing which we see, when it addresses the same classes?"

"There may be a change some day; but not through any theorick about it. England may have her *Æschylus*—when the man comes; perchance in our age—more likely when all the dust and cobwebs of our semi-barbarism are swept away—for we are barbarians yet, Greville."

"Come, come—your fine Italian reading has spoiled you for our brave old English. We have poetry in us if we would trust to nature. There is the ancient blind crowder that sits at our school-gate, with his ballads of love and war, which you like as much as I do. Has he no poetry to tell of? As good, I think, as the sonnets of Master Francis Petrarch."

"Don't be a heretic, Greville. But see; the sun is sinking behind that bosky hill, from which Hotspur, looking to the east, saw it rise for the last time. We must be homeward."

"And here, where the chapel bell is tolling a few priests to even-song, forty thousand men were fighting, a century and a half ago—for what?"

"And for the same doubtful cause went on fighting for three quarters of a century. What a sturdy heart must our England have to bear these things and yet live?"

"Times are changed, Philip! Shall we have any civil strife in our day?"

"Papist and Puritan would like to be at it. But the rule of the law is too strong for them. Yet my father says that the fighting days will come over again—not for questions of sovereign lineage, but of vulgar opinion. The reforms of religion have produced sturdy thinkers. There is a beast with many heads called the Commonalty, growing stronger every day; and it is difficult to chain him or pare his claws."

"Well, well, Philip, we are young politicians, and need not trouble our heads yet about such matters. You are going to Oxford. What will the good mother make of you—a statesman, a soldier, or a scholar?"

"Must the characters be separable? Whatever I am, dear Fulke, I will not shame my ancestry."

"And I, dear Philip, will never abate my love for you; and that will keep me honest."

SHAKSPERE'S FIRST RIDE TO LONDON.

Two young men, Richard Burbage and William Shakspeare, "both of one county, and, indeed, almost of one town," may be assumed, without any improbability, to have taken their way together towards London, on the occasion when one of them went forth for the first time from his native home, depressed at parting, but looking hopefully towards the issue of his adventure. There would be little said till long after the friends had crossed the great bridge at Stratford. The eyes of one would be frequently turned back to look upon the old spire. Thoughts which unquestionably have grown out of some such separation as this would involuntarily possess his soul :—

" How heavy do I journey on the way,
When what I seek—my weary travel's end—
Doth teach that ease and that repose to say,
' Thus far the miles are measur'd from thy friend !'
The beast that bears me, tired with my woe,
Plods dully on to bear that weight in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider lov'd not speed, being made from thee."*

The first stages of this journey would offer little interest to the travellers. Having passed Long Compton, and climbed the steep range of hills

* Sonnet 50.

that divide Warwickshire from Oxfordshire, weary stretches of barren downs would present a novel contrast to the fertility of Shakspeare's own county. But after a few miles the scene would change: a noble park would stretch out as far as the eye could reach—rich with venerable oaks and beeches, planted in the reign of Henry I.—the famous park of Woodstock. The poet would be familiar with all the interesting associations of this place. Here was Rosamond Clifford secluded from the eyes of the world by her bold and accomplished royal lover. Here dwelt Edward III. Here, more interesting than either fact, Chaucer wrote some of his early poems—

“ Within a lodge out of the way,
Beside a well in a forest.” *

And here, when he retired from active life, he composed his immortal ‘*Canterbury Tales*.’ Here was the Lady Elizabeth a prisoner, almost dreading death, only a year or two before she ascended the throne. Here, “hearing upon a time out of her garden a certain milkmaid singing pleasantly, she wished herself to be a milkmaid as she was; saying that her case was better, and life more merrier, than was hers in that state as she was.” † The travellers assuredly visited the palace which a few years after Hentzner described as abounding in magnificence; and near a spring of the brightest water they would have viewed all that was left of

* Chaucer's ‘*Dream*.’

† Holinshed.




the tomb of Rosamond, with her rhyming epitaph, the production, probably, of a later age :—

“ Hic jacet in tombâ Rosamundi non Rosamundâ,
Non redolet sed olet, quæ redolere solet.”

The earliest light of the next morning would see the companions on their way to Oxford ; and an hour's riding would lodge them in the famous hostelry of the Corn-Market, the Crown. Aubrey tells us that “ Mr. William Shakespeare was wont to go into Warwickshire once a year, and did commonly in his journey lie at this house in Oxon, where he was exceedingly respected.”* The poet's first journey may have determined his subsequent habit of resting at this house. It is no longer an inn. But one who possessed a true enthusiasm, Thomas Warton, described it in the last century, in the belief “ that Shakspeare's old hostelry at Oxford deserves no less respect than Chaucer's Tabard at Southwark.” He says, “ As to the Crown Inn, it still remains an inn, and is an old decayed house, but probably was once a principal inn in Oxford. It is directly in the road from Stratford to London. In a large upper room, which seems to have been a sort of hall for entertaining a large company, or for accommodating (as was the custom) different parties at once, there was a bow window, with three pieces of excellent painted glass.” We have ample materials for ascertaining what aspect Oxford presented for

* *Life of Davenant.*

the first time to the eye of Shakspeare. The ancient castle, according to Hentzner, was in ruins ; but the elegance of its private buildings, and the magnificence of its public ones, filled this traveller with admiration. So noble a place, raised up entirely for the encouragement of learning, would excite in the young poet feelings that were strange and new. He had wept over the ruins of religious houses ; but here was something left to give the assurance that there was a real barrier against the desolations of force and ignorance. A deep regret might pass through his mind that he had not availed himself of the opening which was presented to the humblest in the land, here to make himself a ripe and good scholar. Oxford was the patrimony of the people ; and he, one of the people, had not claimed his birthright. He was set out upon a doubtful adventure ; the persons with whom he was to be associated had no rank in society,—they were to a certain extent despised ; they were the servants of a luxurious court, and, what was sometimes worse, of a tasteless public. But, on the other hand, as he paused before Balliol College, he must have recollected what a fearful tragedy was there acted some thirty years before. Was he sure that the day of persecution for opinions was altogether past ? Men were still disputing everywhere around him ; and the slighter the differences between them, the more violent their zeal. They were furious for or against certain ceremonial observances ; so that they appeared to forget that the



object of all devotional forms was to make the soul approach nearer to the Fountain of wisdom and goodness, and that He could not be approached without love and charity. The spirit of love dwelt in the inmost heart of this young man. It was in after times to diffuse itself over writings which entered the minds of the loftiest and the humblest, as an auxiliary to that higher teaching which is too often forgotten in the turmoil of the world. His intellect would at any rate be free in the course which was before him. Much of the knowledge that he had acquired up to this period was self-taught ; but it was not the less full and accurate. He had ranged at his will over a multitude of books,—idle reading, no doubt, to the systematic and professional student ; but, if weeds, weeds out of which he could extract honey. The subtile disputations of the schools, as they were then conducted, were more calculated, as he had heard, to call forth a talent for sophistry than a love of truth. Falsehood might rest upon logic, for the perfect soundness of the conclusion might hide the rottenness of the premises. He entered the beautiful Divinity Schools, and there too he found that the understanding was more trained to dispute than the whole intellectual being of man to reverence. He would pursue his own course with a cheerful spirit, nothing doubting that, whilst he worked out his own happiness, he might still become an instrument of good to his fellow men. And yet did the young man reverence Oxford,

because he revered letters as opposed to illiteracy. He gave his testimony to the worth of Oxford at a distant day, when he held that the great glory of Wolsey was to have founded Christchurch :—

“ He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one :
Exceeding wise, fair spoken, and persuading—
Lofty and sour to them that loved him not ;
But, to those men that sought him, sweet as summer.
And though he were unsatisfied in getting,
(Which was a sin), yet, in bestowing, madam,
He was most princely. Ever witness for him
Those twins of learning that he rais'd in you,
Ipswich and Oxford ; one of which fell with him,
Unwilling to outlive the good he did it ;
The other, though unfinish'd, yet so famous,
So excellent in art, and still so rising,
That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue.”*

The journey from Oxford to London must have occupied two days, in that age of bad roads and long miles. Harrison, in his ‘Chapter on Thoroughfares’ (1586), gives us the distances from town to town :—Oxford to Whatleie, 4 miles ; Whatleie to Thetisford, 6 ; Thetisford to Stockingchurch, 5 ; Stockingchurch to East Wickham, 5 ; East Wickham to Baccansfield, 5 ; Baccansfield to Uxbridge, 7 ; Uxbridge to London, 15. Total, 47 miles. Our modern admeasurements give 54. Over this road, then, in many parts a picturesque one, would the two friends from Stratford take their course. They would fare well and cheaply on the road. Harrison tells us, “ Each comer is sure to lie in

* Henry VIII. Act i., Scene 1.

clean sheets, wherein no man hath been lodged since they came from the laundress, or out of the water wherein they were last washed. If the traveller have a horse his bed doth cost him nothing, but if he go on foot he is sure to pay a penny for the same. But whether he be horseman or footman, if his chamber be once appointed he may carry the key with him, as of his own house, so long as he lodgeth there. If he lose aught whilst he abideth in the inn, the host is bound by a general custom to restore the damage, so that there is no greater security anywhere for travellers than in the greatest inns of England."

On the evening of the fourth day after their departure from home would the young wayfarers, accustomed to fatigue, reach London. They would see only fields and hedge-rows, leading to the hills of Hampstead and Highgate on the north of the road, and to Westminster on the south. They would be wholly in the country, with a long line of road before them, without a house, at the spot which now, although bearing the name of a lane—Park Lane—is one of the chosen seats of fashion. Here Burbage would point out to his companion the distant roofs of the Abbey and the Hall of Westminster; and nearer would stand St. James's Palace,—a solitary and somewhat gloomy building. They would ride on through fields till they came very near the village of St. Giles's. Here, turning from their easterly direction to the south, they would pass through meadows, with the herd quietly

grazing under the evening sun in one enclosure, and the laundress collecting her bleached linen in another. They are now in St. Martin's Lane ; and the hum of population begins to be heard. The inn in the Strand receives their horses, and they take boat at Somerset Place. Then bursts upon the young stranger a full conception of the wealth and greatness of that city of which he has heard so much, and imagined so much more. Hundreds of boats are upon the river. Here and there a stately barge is rowed along, gay with streamers and rich liveries ; and the sound of music is heard from its decks, and the sound is repeated from many a beauteous garden that skirts the water's edge. He looks back upon the cluster of noble buildings that form the Palace of Westminster. York Place and the spacious Savoy bring their historical recollections to his mind. He looks eastward, and there is the famous Temple, and the Palace of Bridewell, and Baynard's Castle. Above all these rises up the majestic spire of Paul's. London Bridge, that wonder of the world, now shows its picturesque turrets and multitudinous arches ; and in the distance is seen the Tower of London, full of grand and solemn associations. The boat rests at the Blackfriars. In a few minutes they are threading the narrow streets of the precinct ; and a comfortable house affords the weary youths a cheerful welcome.

MAY-MORNING : ITS POETRY AND ITS PROSE.

ONCE upon a Time—it is a quarter of a century ago—I used to have raptures about May-Day. I translated Buchanan's Ode to May; I read Herrick under the hawthorn-trees in Windsor Park. On one year, tempted by as bright a sky and as balmy an air as ever inspired the votaries of spring in this variable climate, I silently gave myself up to the fascinations of the beauteous budding-time and its old recollections. I believed in all our ancestors' raptures about May-day, convinced that it was with no effort against blights and chills that they went out, as old Stow tells us, on that memorable morning, "into the sweet meadows and green woods, there to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers, and with the harmony of birds praising God in their kind." I then understood, while the blue vault was scarcely speckled with a cloud, and the foliage of the trees put forth its freshest green, and the hawthorn was budding to prove that the old seasons had not forsaken us, and the thrush was singing over his sitting mate—I then understood the enthusiasm of one of our old rural poets :—

"Get up, get up, for shame! the blooming Morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn ;

See how Aurora throws her fair
Fresh-quilted colours through the air.
Get up, sweet slug-a-bed ! and see
The dew bespangling herb and tree ;
Each flower has wept, and bow'd towards the east
Above an hour since, yet you not drest ;
Nay, not so much as out of bed,
When all the birds have matins said,
And sung their thankful hymns ;—'tis sin,
Nay, profanation, to keep in ;
When as a thousand virgins on this day
Spring sooner than the lark to fetch in May."

It was in that happy season that I rubbed up, for the first time, some of the antiquarianism of May-day. The formal Mr. Bourne, who coquetted with old customs by diligently recording them with a pious abuse of their heathenish vanities, says—
"On the calends, or the first day of May, commonly called May-day, the juvenile part of both sexes were wont to rise a little after midnight, and walk to some neighbouring wood, accompanied with music and the blowing of horns ; where they break down branches from the trees, and adorn them with nose-gays and crowns of flowers. When this is done they return with their booty homewards, about the rising of the sun, and make their doors and windows to triumph in the flowery spoil. The after-part of the day is chiefly spent in dancing round a tall pole, which is called a May-pole ; which, being placed in a convenient part of the village, stands there, as it were, consecrated to the goddess of flowers, without the least violation offered it in the whole circle of the year. And this is not the custom of the British

common people only, but it is the custom of the generality of other nations; particularly of the Italians, where Polydore Virgil tells us the youth of both sexes were accustomed to go into the fields on the calends of May, and bring thence the branches of trees, singing all the way as they came, and so place them on the doors of their houses.— This is the relic of an ancient custom among the heathen, who observed the four last days of April, and the first of May, in honour of the goddess Flora, who was imagined the deity presiding over the fruit and flowers.”

The solemnities of the May-pole are thus described by Browne in his *Britannia's Pastorals* :—

“ As I have seen the Lady of the May
Set in an arbour—
Built by the May-pole, where the jocund swains
Dance with the maidens to the bagpipe's strains—
When envious Night commands them to be gone,
Call for the merry youngsters one by one,
And for their well performance soon disposes,
To this, a garland interwove with roses;
To that, a carved hook, or well-wrought scrip;
Gracing another with a cherry lip:
To one her garter; to another then
A handkerchief cast o'er and o'er agen;
Add none returneth empty that hath spent
His pains to fill their rural merriment.”

The Puritans waged war with the May-poles, and indeed with all those indications of a full-hearted simplicity which were the echo of the universal harmony of Nature. The May-poles never held up their heads after the civil wars. The “strait-laced”

exulted in their fall, but we believe the people were neither wiser nor happier for their removal :—

“ Happy the age, and harmless were the days,
For then true love and amity were found,
When every village did a May-pole raise,
And Whitsun ales and May-games did abound ;
And all the lusty youngers in a rout,
With merry lasses danced the rod about ;
Then Friendship to the banquet bid the guests,
And poor men fared the better for their feasts.
Alas, poor May-poles ! what should be the cause
That you were almost banish'd from the earth,
Who never were rebellious to the laws ?
Your greatest crime was honest, harmless mirth.”

But the sports of May were not confined to the villages. Even the gorgeous pomp of the old Courts did not disdain to borrow a fragrance and freshness from the joys of the people. Hall, the historian, gives us an account of “Henry the Eighth’s riding a Maying from Greenwich to the high ground of Shooter’s-hill, with Queen Katharine his wife, accompanied with many lords and ladies.” The good people of London in those days were not ashamed to let in a little of the light of creation upon their mercantile pursuits. Stow tells us, “In the month of May, the citizens of London (of all estates), lightly in every parish, or sometimes two or three parishes joining together, had their several Mayings, and did fetch in May-poles with divers warlike shows, with good archers, morrice-dancers, and other devices for pastime all the day long ; and towards the evening they had stage-plaies, and

bone-fires in the streets.”—“The gratulation of the spring-season” has no more a place amongst us; the leaves and the flowers come without a “Hail!” from the court, the city, or the village.

There came another season—a cold wet time—and I was out of humour with May. I wrote disparagingly of the often echoed tones of that innocent flock who frisk about in the sunshine of our north-east blights, and resolve to be Arcadian with a temperature of 60°. I will do penance for my heresies by showing how inconsistent one may be under “skyey influences:”—

In despite of our friends Shakspeare and Fletcher, and of him who did more than all of them to make May poetical, Herrick, I am constrained to assert, that never yet was May-day celebrated in such a pure spirit of pastoral innocence as might be advantageously revived in these degenerate times. I fear that during the last three hundred years it was never the good fortune of any gallant to go a May-ing before daybreak with any young ladies of very scrupulous virtue;—and I am not quite sure that Jack in the Green was ever enacted by any higher description of persons than the ragged boys of the village, whose enthusiasm for an eleemosynary penny was somewhat greater than their love of “green fields” and “blue skies.” I am afraid there has never been any great deal of practical poetry in England;—and I grieve to think that May-day was

not often distinguished by a more refined spirit than the promiscuous gaiety of Greenwich fair; and that the homage to nature which the lads and lasses of ancient times got up for the occasion was not quite so amusing to the world at large, and certainly not more edifying, than that of the chimney-sweepers.

To carry my prosaic belief no farther back than the romantic days of the Sydneys and Raleighs, let me picture a dance round the May-pole, at which Elizabeth was present. The scene Windsor. Her most gracious Majesty is busily employed in brushing up her Latin and her Castle at the same time—doing Horace's 'Art of Poetry' into execrable rhymes, and building private staircases for the Earl of Leicester. Her employment and the season make her aspire to be poetical. She resolves to see the May-day sports; and, sallying forth from the Castle, takes a short cut, with few attendants, through the lawn which lay before the South Gate, to the fields near the entrance of Windsor town. The May-pole stands close by the spot where now commences the Long Walk. The crowd make obsequious way for their glorious Queen, and the sports, at her command, go uninterruptedly forward. The group is indeed a most motley one. The luxuries of a white cotton gown were then unknown, and even her Majesty's experience of knitted hose was very limited. The girls frisk away, therefore, in their grey kirtles of linsey-woolsey, and their yellow stockings of coarse broad-

cloth ; the lads are somewhat fuddled and rather greasy, and a whole garment is a considerable distinction. The Queen of the May is commanded to approach. She has a tolerable garland of violets and primroses, but a most unprepossessing visage, pimpled with exercise or ale. "And so, my dainty maiden," says her Majesty, "you are in love with Zephyr, and hawthorn bushes, and morning dew, and wendest to the fields ere Phœbus gilds the drifted clouds." "Please your Majesty," says the innocent, "I'm in love with Tom Larkin, the handsome fleshmonger, and a pretty dressing my mother will give me for ganging a Maying in the gray of the morning. There's queer work for lasses amongst these rakehellies, please your Majesty." Elizabeth suddenly turns with a frown to her lord in waiting, and hurries back as if she had pricked her finger with a May-bush.

AMATEURS AND ACTORS.

At the close of the year 1587, and the opening, according to our new style, of 1588, "the Queen's Majesty being at Greenwich, there were showed, presented, and enacted before her Highness, betwixt Christmas and Shrovetide, seven plays, besides feats of activity and other shows, by the children of Paul's, her Majesty's own servants, and the gentlemen of Gray's Inn, on whom was employed divers remnants of cloth of gold and other stuff out of the store." Such is the record of the accounts of the revels at court. Of the seven plays performed by the children of Paul's and the Queen's servants there is no memorial ; but we learn from the title of a book of uncommon rarity of what nature were the "Certaine Devises and Shewes presented Her Majestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes Inne, at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty-eighth day of Februarie, in the thirtieth year of her Majestie's most happy raigne."* The 'Misfortunes of Arthur, Uther Pendragon's son,' was the theme of these devices and shows. It was "reduced into tragical notes by Thomas Hughes, one of the society of Gray's Inn." It was "set down as it passed from under his hands, and as it

* A copy in the Garrick Collection, in the British Museum.

was presented, excepting certain words and lines, where some of the actors either helped their memories by brief omissions, or fitted their acting by alteration."

Thomas Hughes also tells us that he has put "a note at the end of such speeches as were penned by others, in lieu of these hereafter following." It is pleasant to imagine the gentlemen of Gray's Inn sitting over their sack during the Christmas of 1587, listening to Thomas Hughes reciting his doleful tragedy, cutting out a speech here, adding something wondrously telling there; the most glib of tongue modestly declining to accept the part of Arthur the king, and expressing his content with Mordred the usurper; a beardless student cheerfully agreeing to wear the robes of Guenevra the queen, and a gray-headed elder undertaking the ghost of the Duke of Cornwall. A perfect play it is, if every accessory of a play can render it perfect; for every act has an argument, and every argument a dumb-show, and every dumb-show a chorus. Here is indeed an ample field for ambitious members of the honourable society to contribute their devices; and satisfactory it is that the names of some of his fellow-labourers in this elaborate work have been preserved to us by the honour-giving Thomas Hughes. "The dumb-shows and additional speeches were partly devised by William Fulbeck, Francis Flower, Christopher Yelverton, Francis Bacon, John Lancaster, and others, who with Master Penroodock and Lancaster


directed these proceedings at Court." Precious is this record. The salt that preserves it is the one name of Francis Bacon. Bacon, in 1588, was Reader of Gray's Inn. To the devices and shows of Hughes's tragedy—accompaniments that might lessen the tediousness of its harangues, and scatter a little beauty and repose amongst its scenes of crime and murder—Bacon would bring something of that high poetical spirit which gleams out at every page of his philosophy. Nicholas Trotte, gentleman, penned the introduction, "which was pronounced in manner following, namely, three Muses came upon the stage appavelled accordingly, bringing five gentlemen-students attired in their usual garments, whom one of the Muses presented to her Majesty as captives." But the dresses, the music, the dancing to song, were probably directed by the tasteful mind who subsequently wrote, "These things are but toys; but yet, since princes will have such things, it is better that they should be graced with elegancy than daubed with cost." * Under the roof, then, of the old palace at Greenwich—the palace which Humphrey of Gloucester is said to have built, and where Elizabeth was born—are assembled the gentlemen of Gray's Inn and the Queen's players. The two master-spirits of their time—amongst the very greatest of all time—are there. Francis Bacon, the lawyer, and William Shakspeare, the actor, are unconscious each of the greatness of the other. The difference of their

* Of Masques and Triumphs.—*Essay* 37.

rank probably prevents that communication which might have told each something of the other's power. Master Penrودock and Master Lancaster may perhaps solicit a little of the professional advice of Burbage and his men; and the other gentlemen who penned the dumb-shows may have assisted at the conference. A flash of wit from William Shakspeare may have won a smile from the Reader of Gray's Inn; and he may have dropped a scrap of that philosophy which is akin to poetry, so as to make the young actor reverence him more highly than as the son of Elizabeth's former honest Lord Keeper. But the signs of that freemasonry by which great minds know each other could scarcely be exchanged. They would go their several ways, the one to tempt the perils and the degradations of ambition, and to find at last a refuge in philosophy; the other to be content with a well-earned competence, and gathering amidst petty strifes and jealousies, if such could disturb him, something more than happiness in the culture of that wondrous imagination which had its richest fruits in his own unequalled cheerful wisdom.

Elizabeth, the Queen, is now in her fifty-fifth year. She is ten years younger than when Paul Hentzner described her, as he saw her surrounded with her state in this same palace. The wrinkles of her face, oblong and fair, were perhaps not yet very marked. Her small black eyes, according to the same authority, were pleasant even in her age.

The hooked nose, the narrow lips, and the discoloured teeth, were perhaps less noticeable when Shakspeare looked upon her in his early days. The red hair was probably not false, as it afterwards was. The small hand and the white fingers were remarkable enough of themselves, but, sparkling with rings and jewels, the eye rested upon them. The young poet, who has been lately sworn her servant, has stood in the backward ranks of the presence-chamber, to see his dread mistress pass to chapel. The room is thronged with counsellors and courtiers. The inner doors are thrown open, and the gentlemen-pensioners, bearing their gilt battle-axes, appear in long file. The great officers of the household and ministers of state are marshalled in advance. The procession moves. When the Queen appears, sudden and frequent are the genuflexions: "Wherever she turned her face as she was going along, every body fell down upon their knees." But she is gracious, according to the same authority: "Whoever speaks to her it is kneeling; now and then she raises some with her hand." As she moves into the ante-chapel loud are the shouts of "Long live Queen Elizabeth!" The service is soon ended, and then to dinner. While reverence has been paid to "the only Ruler of Princes," forms as reverent in their outward appearance have been offered even to the very place where the creature-comforts of our every-day life are to be served up to majesty. Those who cover the table with the cloth kneel three times with the



utmost veneration ; so do the bearers of the salt-cellar, of the plate, and of the bread. A countess, dressed in white silk, prostrates herself with the same reverence before the plate, which she rubs with bread and salt. The yeomen of the guard enter, bearing the dishes, and the lady in white silk, with her tasting-knife, presents a portion of each dish to the lips of the yeomen, not in courtesy but in suspicion of poison. The bray of trumpets and the clang of kettle-drums ring through the hall. The Queen is in her inner-chamber ; and the dishes are borne in by ladies of honour with silent solemnity. When the Queen has eaten the ladies eat. Brief is the meal on this twenty-eighth of February, for the hall must be cleared for the play.

The platform in the hall at Greenwich, which was to resound with the laments of Arthur, was constructed by a cunning workman, so as to be speedily erected and taken down. It was not so substantial an affair as the "great stage, containing the breadth of the church from the one side to the other," that was built in the noble chapel of King's College, Cambridge, in 1564, for the representation before the Queen of a play of Plautus. Probably in one particular the same arrangement was pursued at Greenwich as at Cambridge on that occasion: "A multitude of the guard had every man in his hand a torch-staff ; and the guard stood upon the ground by the stage-side holding their lights." But there would be some space between the stage and the

courtly audience. Raised above the rushes would the Queen sit upon a chair of state. Around her would stand her honourable maids. Behind, the eager courtiers with the ready smile when majesty vouchsafed to be pleased. Amongst them is the handsome captain of the guard, the tall and bold Raleigh,—he of the high forehead, long face, and small piercing eye.* His head is ever and anon inclined to the chair of Elizabeth. He is “as good as a chorus,” and he can tell more of the story than the induction “penned by Nicholas Trotte, gentleman.” He has need, however, to tell little as the play proceeds. The plot does not unravel itself; the incidents arise not clearly and naturally; but some worthy person amongst the characters every now and then informs the audience, with extreme politeness, and with a most praiseworthy completeness of detail, everything that has happened, and a good deal of what will happen; and thus the unities of time and place are preserved according to the most approved rules, and Mr. Thomas Hughes eschews the offences which were denounced by the lamented Sir Philip Sidney, of having “Asia of the one side, and Africa of the other, and so many other kingdoms that the player when he comes in must ever begin with telling where he is, or else the tale will not be conceived.”† The author of the ‘Misfortunes of Arthur’ avoids

* “He had a most remarkable aspect, an exceeding high forehead, long-faced, and sour eye-lidded—a kind of pig-eye.”—*Aubrey*.

† Defence of Poesy.

this by the somewhat drowsy method of substituting the epic narrative for the dramatic action. The Queen whispers to Raleigh that the regular players are more amusing.

A day or two passes on, and her Majesty again wants diversion. She bends her mind manfully to public affairs, and it is a high and stirring time ; but, if it only be to show her calmness to her people, she will not forego her accustomed revels. Her own players are sent for ; and the summons is hasty and peremptory for some fitting novelty. Will the comedy which young Shakspeare has written for the Blackfriars, and which has been already in rehearsal, be suited for the court ? The cautious sagacity of old Burbage is willing to confide in it. Without attempting too close an imitation of court manners, its phrases he conceives are refined, its lines are smooth. There are some slight touches of satire, at which it bethinks him the Queen will laugh ; but there is nothing personal, for Don Armado is a Spaniard. The verse, he holds, sounds according to the right stately fashion in the opening of the play :—

“ Let fame, that all hunt after in their lives,
Live register'd upon our brazen tombs.”

The young poet is a little licentious, however, in the management of his verse as he proceeds ; he has not Marlowe's lofty cadences, which roll out so nobly from the full mouth. But the lad will mend. Truly he has a comic vein. If Kempe

takes care to utter what is put down for him in Costard, her Majesty will forget poor Tarleton. And then the compliments to the ladies :—

“ They are the books, the arts, the academes,
That show, contain, and nourish all the world.”

Elizabeth will take the compliments to herself. The young man's play shall be “ preferred.”

It is a bright sparkling morning — “ the first mild day of March ” — as the Queen's barge waits for Burbage and his fellows at the Blackfriars Stairs. They are soon floating down the tide. Familiar as that scene now is to him, William Shakspeare cannot look upon it without wonder and elation of heart. The venerable Bridge, with its hundred legends and traditions ; the Tower, where scenes have been acted that haunt his mind, and must be embodied some day for the people's instruction. And now, verses, some of which he has written in the quiet of his beloved Stratford, characters that he has drawn from the stores of his youthful observation, are to be presented for the amusement of a Queen. But, with a most modest estimate of his own powers, he is sure that he has heard some very indifferent poetry, which nevertheless has won the Queen's approbation, with many jokes, at which the Queen has laughed, that scarcely have seemed to him fitting for royal ears. If his own verses are not listened to, perhaps the liveliness of his little Moth may command a smile. At any rate there will be some show in his pageant

of the Nine Worthies. He will meet the issue courageously.

The Queen's players have now possession of the platform in the hall. Burbage has ample command of tailors, and of stuff out of the store. Pasteboard and buckram are at his service in abundance. The branches are garnished, the arras is hung. The Queen and her court are seated. But the experiment of the new play soon ceases to be a doubtful one. Those who can judge, and the Queen is amongst the number, listen with eagerness to something different to the feebleness of the pastoral and mythological stories to which they have been accustomed. "The summer's nightingale" * himself owns that a real poet has arisen, where poetry was scarcely looked for. The Queen commands that rewards, in some eyes more precious than the accustomed gloves, should be bestowed upon her players. Assuredly the delightful comedy of 'Love's Labour's Lost,' containing as it does in every line the evidence of being a youthful work, was very early one of those

" Flights upon the banks of Thames
That so did take Eliza."

* Raleigh is so called by Spenser.

BEN JONSON'S MOTHER.

IN Hartshorn Lane, near Charing Cross, about the year 1580, dwells Mr. Thomas Fowler, a master bricklayer. He had married, in 1575, Mrs. Margaret Jonson, a widow; and had become the protector of her little boy, Benjamin, then about a year and a half old.

Benjamin is now in his sixth year. He duly attends the parish school in St. Martin's Church; for his father was "a grave minister of the gospel," and his mother is anxious that her only child, poor although he must be, shall lack no advantages of education. We see the sturdy boy daily pacing to school, through the rough and miry way of that half rural district. In his play-hours he is soon in the fields, picking blackberries in Hedge Lane, or flying his kite by the Windmill in Saint Giles's. His father-in-law is a plain, industrious, trusty man, —not rich enough to undertake any of the large works which the luxurious wants of the town present; and oftentimes interfered with, in the due course of his labour, by royal proclamations against the increase of houses, which are rigidly enforced when a humble man desires to build a cottage. But young Ben has found friends. To the parish

school sometimes comes Master Camden ; and he observes the bold boy, always at the head of his class, and not unfrequently having his "clear and fair skin" disfigured by combats with his dirty companions, who litter about the alleys of Saint Martin's Lane. The boy has won good Master Camden's heart ; and so, in due time, he proposes to remove him to Westminster School.

Let us look at the Shadow of his Mother, as she debates this question with her husband, at their frugal supper. "The boy must earn his living," says the bricklayer. "He is strong enough to be of help to me. He can mix the mortar ; he will soon be able to carry the hod. Learning ! stuff ! he has had learning enow, for all the good it will do him."—"Thomas Fowler," responds the mother, "if I wear my fingers to the bone, my boy shall never carry the hod. Master Camden, a good man, and a learned, will pay for his schooling. Shall we not give him his poor meals and his pallet-bed ? Master Camden says he will make his way. I owe it to the memory of him who is gone, that Benjamin shall be a scholar, and perhaps a minister."—"Yes ; and be persecuted for his opinions, as his father was. These are ticklish times, Margaret—the lowest are the safest. Ben is passionate, and obstinate, and will quarrel for a straw. Make him a scholar, and he becomes Papist or Puritan—the quiet way is not for the like of him. He shall be apprenticed to me, wife, and earn his daily bread safely and honestly." Night after night is the de-

bate renewed. But the mother triumphs. Ben does go to Westminster School. He has hard fare at home ; he has to endure many a taunt as he sits apart in the Abbey cloisters, intent upon his task. But Camden is his instructor and his friend. The bricklayer's boy fights his way to distinction.

Look again at the Shadow of that proud Mother as, after three or four anxious years, she hears of his advancement. He has an exhibition. He is to remove to Cambridge. Her Benjamin must be a bishop. Thomas Fowler is incredulous—and he is not generous : “When Benjamin leaves this roof he must shift for himself, wife.” The mother drops one tear when her boy departs ;—the leathern purse which holds her painful savings is in Benjamin's pocket.

It is a summer night of 1590, when Benjamin Jonson walks into the poor house of Hartshorn Lane. He is travel-stained and weary. His jerkin is half hidden beneath a dirty cloak. That jerkin, which looked so smart in a mother's eyes when last they parted, is strangely shrunk—or, rather, has not the spare boy grown into a burly youth, although the boy's jerkin must still do service? The bricklayer demands his business ;—the wife falls upon his neck. And well may the bricklayer know him not. His face is “pimpled ;” hard work and irregular living have left their marks upon him. The exhibition has been insufficient for his maintenance. His spirit has been sorely wounded. The scholar

of sixteen thinks he should prefer the daily bread which is to be won by the labour of his hands, to the hunger for which pride has no present solace. Benjamin Jonson becomes a bricklayer.

And now, for two years, has the mother—her hopes wholly gone, her love only the same—to bear up under the burden of conflicting duties. The young man duly works at the most menial tasks of his business. He has won his way to handle a trowel;—but he is not conformable in all things. “Wife,” says Thomas Fowler, “that son of yours will never prosper. Cannot he work,—and cannot he eat his meals,—without a Greek book in his vest? This very noon must he seat himself, at dinner-hour, in the shade of the wall in Chancery Lane, on which he had been labouring; and then comes a reverend Bencher and begins discourse with him; and Ben shows him his book—and they talk as if they were equal. Margaret, he is too grand for me; he is above his trade.”—“Shame on ye, husband! Does he not work, honestly and deftly? and will you grudge him his books?”—“He haunts the playhouses; he sits in the pit—and cracks nuts—and hisses or claps hands, in a way quite unbecoming a bricklayer’s apprentice. Margaret, I fear he will come to no good.” One night there is a fearful quarrel. It is late when Benjamin returns home. In silence and darkness, the son and mother meet. She is resolved. “Benjamin, my son, my dear son, we will endure this life no longer. There is a sword;—it was your grandfather’s. A gentle-

man wore it ; a gentleman shall still wear it. Go to the Low Countries. Volunteers are called for. There is an expedition to Ostend. Take with you these few crowns, and God prosper you."

Another year, and Benjamin's campaign is ended. At the hearth in Hartshorn Lane sits Margaret Fowler—in solitude. There will be no more strife about her son. Death has settled the controversy. Margaret is very poor. Her trade is unprosperous ; for the widow is defrauded by her servants. "Mother, there is my grandfather's sword—it has done service ; and, now, I will work for you."—"How, my son ?"—"I will be a bricklayer again." We see the Shadow of the Mother, as she strives to make her son content. He has no longer "the lime and mortar" hands with which it was his after-fate to be reproached ; but he bestows the master's eye upon his mother's workmen. Yet he has hours of leisure. There is a chamber in the old house now filled with learned books. He reads, and he writes, as his own pleasure dictates. "Mother," he one day says, "I wish to marry."—"Do so, my son ; bring your wife home ; we will dwell together." So a few years roll on. He and his wife weep

"Mary, the daughter of their youth."

But there is an event approaching which sets aside sorrow. "Daughter," says the ancient lady, "we must to the Rose Playhouse to-night. There is a new play to be acted, and that play is Benjamin's"

—"Yes, mother, he has had divers moneys already. Not much, I wot, seeing the labour he has given to this 'Comedy of Humours'—five shillings, and ten shillings, and, once, a pound."—"No matter, daughter, he will be famous: I always knew he would be famous." A calamity clouds that fame. The play-writer has quarrels on every side. In the autumn of 1598, Philip Henslowe, the manager of "the Lord Admirall's men," writes thus to his son-in-law, Alleyn:—"Since you were with me, I have lost one of my company, which hurteth me greatly—that is, Gabriel; for he is slain in Hogsdon Fields, by the hands of Benjamin Jonson, bricklayer." Twenty years after, the great dramatist, the laureat, thus relates the story to Drummond:—"Being appealed to the fields, he had killed his adversary, which had him hurt in the arm, and whose sword was ten inches longer than his; for the which he was imprisoned, and almost at the gallows." There is the proud Shadow of a Roman Matron hovering about his cell, in those hours when the gallows loomed darkly in the future.

The scholar and the poet has won his fame. Bricklayer no longer, Ben is the companion of the illustrious. Shakspeare hath "wit-combats" with him; Camden and Selden try his metal in learned controversies; Raleigh, and Beaumont, and Donne, and Fletcher, exchange with him "words of subtle flame" at "The Mermaid." But a new trouble arises—James is come to the throne. Hear Jonson's account of a remarkable transaction:—"He

was delated by Sir James Murray to the King, for writing something against the Scots, in a play, 'Eastward Ho,' and voluntarily imprisoned himself, with Chapman and Marston, who had written it amongst them. The report was, that they should then have had their ears cut, and noses." They are at length released. We see the shadow of a banquet, which the poet gave to his friends in commemoration of his deliverance. There is a joyous company of immortals at that feast. There, too, is that loving and faithful Mother. The wine-cups are flowing; there are song and jest, eloquence, and the passionate earnestness with which such friends speak when the heart is opened. But there is one, whose Shadow we now see, more passionate and more earnest than any of that company. She rises, with a full goblet in her hand:—"Son, I drink to thee. Benjamin, my beloved son, thrice I drink to thee. See ye this paper; one grain of the subtle drug which it holds is death. Even as we now pledge each other in rich canary, would I have pledged thee in lusty strong poison, had thy sentence taken execution. Thy shame would have been my shame, and neither of us should have lived after it."

"She was no churl," says Benjamin.

ENGLISH POETS IN SCOTLAND.

I HAVE not hesitated to express a belief that Shakspeare visited Scotland in 1601, as one of the company of English players who performed at Aberdeen that year, under the management of Lawrence Fletcher. The question cannot be satisfactorily settled ; but in the following paper I have taken a rapid view of the supposed journey, as an illustration of the aspects which Scotland would present to an Englishman a little while before the accession of James.*

In the summer of 1618 Ben Jonson undertook the extraordinary task of travelling to Edinburgh on foot. Bacon said to him, with reference to his project, " He loved not to see poësy go on other foot than poetical Dactylus and Spondæus."† Jonson seems to have been proud of his exploit ; for in his 'News from the New World discovered in the Moon,' a masque, presented at Court in 1620, he makes a printer say, " One of our greatest poets (I know not how good a one) went to Edinburgh on foot, and came back." According to Drum-

* This, and two preceding papers, p. 169 and p. 184, formed chapters in the original edition of 'William Shakspeare, a Biography;' but were omitted by me in the succeeding editions.

† Conversations with Drummond.

mond he was "to write his foot pilgrimage hither, and call it a discovery." We have no traces of Jonson in this journey, except what we derive from the 'Conversations with Drummond,' and the notice of honest John Taylor, in his 'Penniless Pilgrimage':—"I went to Leith, where I found my long-approved and assured good friend, Master Benjamin Jonson, at one Master John Stuart's house." Jonson remained long enough in Scotland to become familiar with its hospitable people and its noble scenery. He wrote a poem, in which he called Edinburgh

"The heart of Scotland, Britain's other eye."

"He hath intention," saith Drummond, "to write a fisher or pastoral play, and set the stage of it in the Lomond Lake." After his return to London he earnestly solicits Drummond, by letter, to send him "some things concerning the Loch of Lomond." We find nothing in Jonson's poetry that gives us an impression that he had caught any inspiration from the country of mountains and lakes. We have no internal evidence at all that he had been in Scotland. We have no token of the impress of its mountain-scenery upon his mind approaching to the distinctness of a famous passage in Shakspeare—a solitary passage in a poet who rarely indeed *describes* any scenery, but one which could scarcely have been written without accurate knowledge of the realities to which "black Vesper's pageants" have resemblance:—

“ Sometime we see a cloud that’s dragonish ;
A vapour, sometime, like a bear or lion,
A tower’d citadel, a pendant rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon ’t that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air.”*

John Taylor, homely as he is, may better enable us to trace Shakspeare’s probable course, assuming that the journey was undertaken. Taylor, travelling on foot, was a week in reaching Lichfield, passing through Coventry. He was another week, filling up some time with over-much carousing, before he got out of Manchester. Preston detained him three days with its jollity ; and it was another week before, passing over the hills of Westmoreland, he reached Carlisle. Shakspeare, setting out on horseback from Stratford, would reach Carlisle by easy stages in six days. Taylor stops not to describe the merry city. It was more to his purpose to enjoy the “good entertainment” of which he there “found store,” than to survey its castle and its cathedral ; or to look from its elevated points upon fertile meadows watered by the Eden or the broad Frith, or the distant summits of Crossfell and Skiddaw. Would he had preserved for us some of the ballads that he must have heard in his revelries, that told of the wondrous feats of the bold outlaws who lived in the green-wood around

“ Carlisle, in the north countree.”

* Antony and Cleopatra, one of Shakspeare’s later plays.

Assuredly Shakspeare had heard of Adam Bell, the brave archer of Inglewood: "He that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder and called Adam."* It is pleasant to believe that some snatches of old minstrelsy might have recreated his solitary journey as he rode near the border-land.

Sir Walter Scott, in the delightful Introduction to his 'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,' says, "The accession of James to the English crown converted the extremity into the centre of his kingdom." The Scottish poet would seem to have borrowed the idea from a very humble English brother of the craft:—

"For now those crowns are both in one combin'd,
Those former borders that each one confin'd
Appears to me (as I do understand)
To be almost the centre of the land:
This was a blessed heaven-expounded riddle
To thrust great kingdom's skirts into the middle."†

John Taylor trudges from Carlisle into Annandale, wading through the Esk, and wondering that he saw so little difference between the two countries, seeing that Scotland had its sun and sky, its sheep, and corn, and good ale. But he tells us that in former times this border-land

"Was the curs'd climate of rebellious crimes."

According to him, and he was not far wrong, pell-mell fury and hurly-burly, spoiling and wasting,

* Much Ado About Nothing.

† Taylor's 'Penniless Pilgrimage.'

sharking, shifting, cutting throats, and thieving, constituted the practice both of Annandale and Cumberland. When Taylor made his pilgrimage, the existing generation would have a very fresh recollection of these outrages of former times. If Shakspeare travelled over this ground he would be more familiar with the passionate hatreds of the borderers, and would hear many a song which celebrated their deadly feuds, and kept alive the spirit of rapine and vengeance. As recently as 1596, the famous Raid of Carlisle had taken place, when the Lord of Buccleuch, then Warden of Liddesdale, surprised the Castle of Carlisle, and carried off a daring Scotch freebooter, Kinmont Willie, who had been illegally seized by the Warden of the West Marches of England, Lord Scrope. The old ballad which, fifty years ago, was preserved by tradition on the western borders of Scotland, was perhaps sung by many a sturdy clansman at the beginning of the seventeenth century:—

“ Wi’ coulters, and wi’ forehammers,
 We garr’d the bars bang merrilie,
 Until we came to the inner prison,
 Where Willie o’ Kinmont he did lie.
 And when we came to the lower prison,
 Where Willie o’ Kinmont he did lie—
 ‘ O sleep ye, wake ye, Kinmont Willie,*
 Upon the morn that thou ’s to die?’ ”†

* The snatch of melody in Lear, in all likelihood part of an English song, will occur to the reader:—

“ Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd? ”

† Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, vol. ii. p. 58.

But the feuds of the Scotch and English borderers were not the only causes of insecurity on the western frontier. If the great dramatic poet, who has painted so vividly the desolation of civil war in his own country, had passed through Annandale in 1601, he would have seen the traces of a petty civil war which was then raging between the clans of Maxwell and Johnstone, who a few years before had met in deadly conflict on the very ground over which he would pass. The Lord of Maxwell, with a vast band of followers, had been slain without quarter. This was something different from the quiet security of England—a state of comparative blessedness that Shakspere subsequently described in Cranmer's prophecy of the glories of Elizabeth :—

“ In her days every man shall eat in safety,
Under his own vine, what he plants ; and sing
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours.”*

The penniless pilgrim travelled over this ground when the security of England had been extended to Scotland ; and he found no greater dangers than wading through the Esk and the Annan, and no severer evils than sleeping in a poor hut upon the hard ground, with dirty pigeons roosting around him.†

Place the poet safely in Edinburgh, after he has

* Henry VIII., Act v.

† Taylor tells several portions of his adventures in plain prose ; and we know of no better picture of the country and its manners than his simple descriptions furnish.

made his solitary journey of three hundred miles, through unaccustomed scenery, partly amongst foreign people and strange manners. A new world has been opened to him. He has left behind him his old fertile midland counties, their woods, their corn-fields now ripe for the harvest, to pass over wild moor-lands with solemn mountains shutting in the distance, now following the course of a brawling stream through a fertile valley cultivated and populous, and then again climbing the summit of some gloomy fell, from which he looks around, and may dream he is in a land where man has never disturbed the wild deer and the eagle. He looks at one time upon

“ Turfy mountains, where live nibbling sheep,
And flat meads thatch'd with stover ;”

and he may say with the Water-Poet, “ I thought myself in England still.” He is presently in the gorge of the mountains, and there are fancies awakening in him which are to shape themselves not into description, but into the delineations of high passions which are to be created out of lofty moods of the mind. In Edinburgh he meets his fellows. The probability is that the Court is not there, for it is the hunting season. Holyrood is a winter palace ; and Edinburgh is not then a city particularly attractive to the Scottish king, who has not forgotten the perils and indignities he has endured through the influence of the stern and uncompromising ministers of religion, who would have

made the temporal power wholly submissive to the spiritual. The timid man has conquered, but all his actions are there viewed with jealousy and malevolence ; and the English players may afford him safer pleasures in other places than where their "unruliness and immodest behaviour" are uncharitably denounced daily from the pulpit. Shakspeare may rest at Edinburgh a day or two ; and the impressions of that city will not easily be forgotten : — a town in which the character of the architecture would seem to vie with the bold scenery in which it is placed, full of historical associations, the seat of Scottish learning and authority, built for strength and defence as much as for magnificence and comfort, whose mansions are fastnesses that would resist an assault from a rival chief or a lawless mob. He looks for a short space upon the halls where she, who fell before the arbitrary power of his own Queen, lived in her days of beauty and youthfulness, surrounded by false friends and desperate enemies, weak and miserable. He sees the pulpits from which Knox thundered, the University which James had founded, and the Castle for whose possession Scotch and English had fought with equal bravery, but varying success. He has gained materials for future reflection.

The country palaces of the Scottish kings inhabited at that period were Linlithgow, Stirling, and Falkland. The gentle lake, the verdant park of Linlithgow were suited for a summer palace. It was the favourite residence of Mary of Guise, queen

of James V. "Gude Schir David Lindsay," Lion King at Arms under James V., here presented to the Court and people his 'Satyre of the Three Estaitis;' and, whatever be his defects, no one can doubt that he possessed a strong vein of humour, and had the courage to speak out boldly of public vice and private immorality, as a poet ought to speak. The conclusion of the drama offers a pleasant sample of the freedom with which these old writers could address even a courtly audience:—

"Now, let ilk man his way avance,
 Let sum ga drink, and sum ga dance:
 Menstrell, blaw up ane brawll of France,
 Let se quha hobbills best:
 For I will rin, incontinent,
 To the tavern, or ever I stent:
 And pray to God, omnipotent,
 To send you all gude rest."

If the halls of Linlithgow had witnessed the performance of one of Shakspeare's comedies by the company of Lawrence Fletcher, no changes in taste during half a century could be more striking than such a contrast of the new drama of England with the old drama of Scotland. But we apprehend that Lawrence Fletcher went in another direction.

The English comedians, servants to James VI., might have contributed to the solace and recreation of the King in the noble castle where he was born. Seven years before, Stirling had been the scene of rare festivities, on the occasion of the baptism of Prince Henry. It was a place fit for a monarch's residence. From these walls he could look at once

upon the fertility and the grandeur of his dominions —its finest river, its boldest mountains, the vale of the Forth, and the summits of Ben Lomond. He could here cherish the proudest recollections of his country's independence. Stirling must have been dear to James as the residence of his boyhood, where he learnt to make Latin verses from Buchanan, the most elegant of pedagogues. He would, perhaps, be prouder of his school-room in the old castle than of its historical associations, and would look with greater delight upon the little valley where he had once seen a gentle tournament, than upon the battle-fields of Cambuskenneth and Bannockburn. Stirling was better fitted for the ceremonial displays of the Scottish Court than the quiet residence of a monarch like James VI. We have seen no record of such displays in the autumn of 1601.

Dumfermline was the jointure-house of Anne of Denmark, and her son Charles was here born in November, 1600. It was a quiet occasional retreat from the turmoil of Edinburgh. But the favourite residence of James in the "latter summer" and autumn was Falkland. The account published, by authority, of the Gowrie conspiracy, opens with a distinct picture of the King's habits: "His Majesty having his residence at Falkland, and being daily at the buck-hunting (as his use is in that season), upon the fifth day of August, being Tuesday, he rode out to the park, between six and seven of the clock in the morning, the weather being wonderful

pleasant and seasonable." A record in Melville's Diary,* within three weeks of this period, gives us another picture of the King and the Court: "At that time, being in Falkland, I saw a fuscambulus Frenchman play strong and incredible pratticks upon stented [stretched] tackle in the palace-close before the King, Queen, and whole Court. This was politicly done to mitigate the Queen and people for Gowrie's slaughter; even then was Henderson tried before us, and Gowrie's pedagogue who had been buted [booted, tortured]." In the great hall of the palace of Falkland, of which enough remains to show its extent and magnificence, we think it probable that Lawrence Fletcher and his fellows exhibited very different performances in the following autumn. They would have abundant novelties to present to the Scottish Court, for all would be new. At the second Christmas after James had ascended the English throne, the early plays of Shakspeare were as much in request at the Court as those which belong to a later period. The Merry Wives of Windsor, The Comedy of Errors, Love's Labour's Lost, Henry V., The Merchant of Venice, all being the productions of the previous century, were produced at Court, and the King commanded The Merchant of Venice a second time. The constant performance of Shakspeare's plays, as shown by the accounts of the Revels, at this early period after James's accession, would seem to indicate something like a previous acquaintance with them; and this

* Quoted in Pitcairn's 'Trials,' vol. ii. p. 238.

acquaintance we may justly assume took place upon the visit of Lawrence Fletcher and his company to Scotland in the autumn of 1601.

From Falkland to Aberdeen would be a considerable journey in those days of neglected roads, when rivers had to be forded, and mountains crossed by somewhat perilous paths. It is not improbable that the company halted at Perth, which was within a morning's ride of Falkland. The Presbytery of that town were more favourably disposed some twelve years before to theatrical performances than the ministers of religion at Edinburgh; they tolerated them under wise restrictions. The King, in 1601, was anxious to stand well with the people of Perth, and he became a burghess of the city, and banqueted with the citizens. It "was politicly done," as Melville says of the French rope-dancer. He might venture in that city to send his servants the players to amuse the people; for those who had supported his leanings towards Episcopalian Church government were strong there, and would gladly embrace any occasion to cultivate amusements that were disagreeable to their ascetic opponents. The same feelings would prevail still more strongly at Aberdeen. The young citizens of Bon Accord, as it was called, clung to the amusements of the older times, the Robin Hoods and Queens of May, in spite of the prohibitions of their magistrates. The Kirk Session prohibited maskers and dancers, but the people still danced; and upon the solemn occasion when the popish

Earls of Huntley and Errol were received into the bosom of the Kirk, upon renouncing their errors, there was music and masking around the Cross, and universal jollity was mingled with the more solemn ceremonials. The people of Aberdeen were a loyal people, and we are not surprised that they welcomed the King's players with rewards and honours.

There is preserved, in the Library of Advocates, a very curious description of Aberdeen in the middle of the seventeenth century, written originally in Latin by James Gordon, parson of Rothemay, with a contemporary translation. The latter has been printed by the Spalding Club. The changes during half a century would not be very considerable; and the English players would therefore have sojourned in a city which, according to this authority, "exceeds not only the rest of the towns in the north of Scotland, but likewise any city whatsoever of that same latitude, for greatness, beauty, and frequency of trading." Gordon's description is accompanied by a large and well-executed plan, which has also been published; and certainly the new and old towns of Aberdeen, as they existed in those days, were spacious, and judiciously laid out, with handsome public buildings and well-arranged streets, backed by wooded gardens,—a pleasant place to look upon, with fruitful fields immediately around it, though "anywhere you pass a mile without the town the country is barren-like, the hills scraggy, the plains full of

marshes and mosses." The parson of Rothemay, with a filial love for his native place, says, "The air is temperate and healthful about it, and it may be that the citizens owe the acuteness of their wits thereunto, and their civil inclinations." This, indeed, was a community fitted to appreciate the treasures which Lawrence Fletcher and his fellows would display before them ; and it is to the honour of Aberdeen that, in an age of strong prejudices, they welcomed the English players in a way which vindicated their own character for "wisdom, learning, gallantry, breeding, and civil conversation." It is not to those who so welcomed them that we must chiefly lay the charge of the witch persecutions of that time. In almost every case these atrocities were committed under the sanction of the Kirk Session ; and in the same way, when a stern religious asceticism became the dominant principle in England, the feeling of religious earnestness, lofty as it was in many essentials, too often was allied with superstitious enthusiasm, which blinded the reason and blunted the feelings as fearfully as the worst errors of the ancient Church. The tolerant Shakspeare would have listened to the stories of these persecutions with the same feelings with which he regarded the ruins of the Dominican convent at Aberdeen, which was razed to the ground in 1560. A right principle was in each case wrongly directed : "There is some soul of goodness in things evil."

We have thus, there being ample documentary

evidence that Shakspeare's Company was at Aberdeen in October, 1601, assumed that Shakspeare would naturally be of the number. His tragedy of *Macbeth* exhibits traces of local knowledge which might have been readily collected by him in the exact path of such a journey. We have attempted very slightly to sketch the associations with which he might have been surrounded during this progress, putting these matters, of course, hypothetically, as materials for the reader to embody in his own imagination. We may conclude the subject by very briefly tracing his path homeward.

Honest John Taylor, who seems to have been ready for every kindness that fortune could bestow upon him, left Edinburgh in better guise than he came thither: "Within the port, or gate, called the Netherbow, I discharged my pockets of all the money I had: and as I came penniless within the walls of that city at my first coming thither, so now, at my departing from thence, I came moneyless out of it again." But he soon found a worthy man ready to help him in his straits: "Master James Acmoote, coming for England, said, that if I would ride with him, that neither I nor my horse should want betwixt that place and London." If we take Taylor as our guide, we may see how Shakspeare journeyed with his fellows, upon the great high road between Edinburgh and the city of their own Blackfriars. On the first day they would ride to Dunbar; on the second day they would reach Berwick. They might lodge at an

inn, but the exuberance of the ancient Scotch hospitality would probably afford them all welcome in the stronghold of some wealthy laird. Taylor thus describes the hospitality of his hosts at Cober-spath [Cockburnspath], between Dunbar and Berwick: "Suppose ten, fifteen, or twenty men and horses came to lodge at their house, the men shall have flesh, tame and wild fowl, fish, with all variety of good cheer, good lodging, and welcome; and the horses shall want neither hay nor provender: and at the morning at their departure the reckoning is just nothing. This is this worthy gentleman's use, his chief delight being only to give strangers entertainment gratis." His description of the hospitality "in Scotland beyond Edinburgh" is more remarkable: "I have been at houses like castles for building; the master of the house his beaver being his blue bonnet, one that will wear no other shirts but of the flax that grows on his own ground, and of his wife's, daughters', or servants' spinning; that hath his stockings, hose, and jerkin of the wool of his own sheeps' backs; that never (by his pride of apparel) caused mercer, draper, silk-man, embroiderer, or haberdasher to break and turn bankrupt: and yet this plain homespun fellow keeps and maintains thirty, forty, fifty servants, or perhaps more, every day relieving three or four score poor people at his gate; and, besides all this, can give noble entertainment, for four or five days together, to five or six Earls and Lords, besides Knights, Gentlemen, and their followers, if they be

three or four hundred men and horse of them, where they shall not only feed but feast, and not feast but banquet; this is a man that desires to know nothing so much as his duty to God and his King, whose greatest cares are to practise the works of piety, charity, and hospitality: he never studies the consuming art of fashionless fashions, he never tries his strength to bear four or five hundred acres on his back at once; his legs are always at liberty —not being fettered with golden garters, and manacled with artificial roses, whose weight (sometime) is the relics of some decayed lordship. Many of these worthy house-keepers there are in Scotland: amongst some of them I was entertained; from whence I did truly gather these aforesaid observations."

The Water-Poet passes through Berwick without a word. The poet of Henry IV. would associate it with vivid recollections of his own Hotspur:

"He had byn a march-man all hys dayes,
And kepte Barwyke-upon-Twede."*

He was now in the land of old heroic memories, which had reached the ear of his boyhood in his own peaceful Stratford, through the voice of the wandering harper; and which Froissart had recorded in a narrative as spirited as the fancies of "the old song of Percy and Douglas." The dark blue Cheviots lifted their summits around him, and

* The Battle of Otterbourne.

beneath them were the plains which the Douglas wasted, who

“ Boldely brente Northomberlande,
And haryed many a towyn.”

He was in the land which had so often been the battle-field of Scotch and English in the chivalrous days, when war appeared to be carried on as much for sport as for policy, and a fight and a hunting were associated in the same song. The great battle of Otterbourne, in 1388, “was as valiantly foughten as could be devised,” says Froissart, “for Englishmen on the one party, and Scots on the other party, are good men of war: for when they meet there is a hard fight without sparring; there is no love between them as long as spears, axes, or daggers will endure, but lay on each upon other; and when they be well beaten, and that the one part hath obtained the victory, they then glorify so in their deeds of arms and are so joyful, that such as be taken they shall be ransomed or they go out of the field, so that shortly each of them is so content with other, that at their departing courteously they will say, God thank you; but in fighting one with another there is no play nor sparring.” The spirit that moved the Percy and Douglas at Otterbourne animated the Percy and another Douglas at Holmedon in 1402.

“ On Holy-rood day, the gallant Hotspur there,
Young Harry Percy, and brave Archibald,

That ever vallant and approved Scot,
At Holmedon met,
Where they did spend a sad and bloody hour.”*

The scene of this conflict was not many miles from Berwick. A knowledge of these localities was not necessary for Shakspeare, to produce his magnificent creation of Hotspur. But in a journey through Northumberland the recollections of Hotspur would be all around him. At Alnwick, he would ride by the gate which Hotspur built, and look upon the castle in which the Percies dwelt. Two centuries had passed since Hotspur fell at Shrewsbury; but his memory lived in the ballads of his land, and the dramatic poet had bestowed upon it a more lasting glory. The play of Henry IV. was written before the union of England and Scotland under one crown, and when the two countries had constant feuds which might easily have broken out into actual war. But Shakspeare, at the very time when the angry passions of England were excited by the Raid of Carlisle, thus made his favourite hero teach the English to think honourably of their gallant neighbours:

“ *P. Henry.* The noble Scot, Lord Douglas, when he saw
The fortune of the day quite turn'd from him,
The noble Percy slain, and all his men
Upon the foot of fear, fled with the rest;
And, falling from a hill, he was so bruise'd
That the pursuers took him. At my tent
The Douglas is; and I beseech your grace
I may dispose of him.

* Henry IV., Part I. Act I. Scene 1.

K. Henry. With all my heart.

P. Henry. Then, brother John of Lancaster, to you
This honourable bounty shall belong :
Go to the Douglas, and deliver him
Up to his pleasure, ransomless, and free :
His valour, shown upon our crests to-day,
Hath taught us how to cherish such high deeds,
Even in the bosom of our adversaries.”*

John Taylor contrived to be eighteen days on the road riding from Edinburgh to London : he was fifteen days in his progress from Berwick to Islington. Lawrence Fletcher and his fellows would make greater speed, and linger not so recklessly over the good cheer of the inns and mansions that opened their gates to them. “The way from Berwick to York and so to London” is laid down very precisely in Harrison’s ‘Description of England ;’ and the several stages present a total of 260 miles. The route thus given makes a circuit of several miles at Tadcaster ; and yet it is 82 miles shorter than the present distance from Berwick to London. Taylor says, “The Scots do allow almost as large measure of their miles as they do of their drink.” So it would appear they did also in England in the days of Shakspeare.

* Henry IV., Part I., Act v. Scene 5.

ROBERT BURTON'S POETICAL COMMONWEALTH.

THE only book that took Samuel Johnson out of his bed two hours before he wished to rise, will scarcely do for a busy man to touch before breakfast. There is no leaving it, except by an effort. I have just taken it up to look for a quotation, as many better scholars than myself have done, and I cannot be satisfied to read on—with 'The Times' of the day, borrowed for an hour, lying unread—but I must needs write a paper suggested by this same treasured 'Anatomy of Melancholy.' I might do worse.

In the Introduction, 'Democritus to the Reader,' I am forcibly struck with the mode in which a student of Christchurch deals with many of the great social questions that are still under discussion after the lapse of two centuries and a quarter. How he satirizes, and how he would reform. Statesmen might have learned something from this "severe student, devourer of authors, melancholy and humourous," * Robert Burton,—as statesmen do contrive, unwilling as they may be, to pick up something of the great general wisdom of humanity from scholars and poets,—if they had looked into a few pages of this 'Introduction,' and not stopped too readily at this sentence :—"Bocca-

* Anthony & Wood.

linus may cite Commonwealths to come before Apollo, and seek to reform the world itself by Commissioners ; but there is no remedy." The governors and the governed are opening their eyes ; so some may perhaps hear what 'Democritus Junior' has to say when he proposes an imaginary condition of improvement :—"I will, to satisfy and please myself, make an Utopia of my own, a new Atlantis, a poetical Commonwealth of my own, in which I will freely domineer, build cities, make laws, statutes, as I list myself." What sort of cities would he build ? He would have them, for the most part, "situate upon navigable rivers or lakes, creeks or havens." That is, he would have them situate where there are facilities for communication. How imperfectly the use of a river as a cheap highway was known in the days when canals and railroads were not, may be seen in a curious tract of our old friend John Taylor.* He tells the people of Salisbury that their city is so much overcharged with poor, as having in three parishes near three thousand ; that their river is not navigable to Christchurch ; that it might be made as passable as the Thames from Brentford to Windsor ; and that by means of such navigation the loiterers might be turned into labourers, and penury into plenty. Burton, writing exactly at the same time, bitterly attacks the ignorance and neglect out of which comes poverty :—"Amongst our towns, there is only one, London, that bears the

* A Discovery by Sea from London to Salisbury, 1623.

face of a city, *Epitome Britannicæ*, a famous Emporium, second to none beyond seas, a noble mart; and yet in my slender judgment defective in many things. The rest, some few excepted (York, Bristol, Norwich, Worcester), are in mean estate, ruinous most part, poor and full of beggars, by reason of their decayed trades, neglected and bad policy, idleness of their inhabitants, riot, which had rather beg or loiter, and be ready to starve, than work." And so Democritus would build other cities, and encourage other sorts of people. "I will have fair and broad streets." How long did we persevere in making our streets ugly and narrow! "I will have convenient churches." Good. "I will have convenient churches, and separate places to bury the dead in; not churchyards." And so an Oxford scholar, in the year 1621, is telling the people of England what her rulers have just found out in this year 1853, and have at last given us a 'Burial Act.' He would have, too, "opportune market-places of all sorts, for corn, meat, cattle." Was Smithfield, the garden of delight for civic wisdom, "opportune"—locally convenient? He would send "trades, noisome or fulsome for bad smells, such as butchers' slaughter-houses, chandlers, curriers, to remote places." In the city of London, in 1853, the slaughter-houses and the book-ware-houses are in pleasant allocation. He would have "commodious Courts of Justice." He was not thinking of such Courts as Sir John Soane's at Westminster. He would have "public walks, and

spacious fields allotted for all gymnics, sports, and honest recreations." Parks for the people are an invention of the last twenty years. "I will have conduits of sweet and good water, aptly disposed in each town." London is still poisoned by the filth of Water-companies. "I will have colleges of mathematicians, musicians and actors, physicians, artists, and philosophers, that all arts and sciences may sooner be perfected and better learned." What has any English Government done for arts and sciences from that hour to this? "I will provide public schools of all kinds, singing, dancing, fencing, and especially of grammar and languages, not to be taught by those tedious precepts ordinarily used, but by use, example, conversation." Compared with our population, are we doing much more in the way of Public Schools of all kinds than in the days of Edward VI., when a few grammar-schools were wrung out of the spoils of the Reformation? In the Registrar-General's Report of Marriages, in 1851, it is shown that one man in three, and one woman in two, could not write.

Of property in land Burton has something to say. He would regulate "what for lords, what for tenants. And because they (the tenants) shall be better encouraged to improve such lands they hold—manure, plant trees, drain, fence—they shall have long leases, a known rent, and known fine, to free them from those intolerable exactions of tyrannizing landlords." Are these the rules of landlord and tenant at this day? But Democritus is

no hater of the great—no leveller. “Plato’s community in many things is impious, absurd, and ridiculous; it takes away all splendour and magnificence. I will have several orders, degrees of nobility, and those hereditary. But as some dignities shall be hereditary, so some again by election or by gift, besides free offices, pensions, annuities, which, like the golden apple, shall be given to the worthiest and best deserving, both in war and peace.” Let any man who is not a younger son of a patrician house—not the relative of one who keeps the Canvassing Book of a corruptible Borough—let any one who has simply done the State service in a way the State never recognises, the improvement of his age—let him ask for the smallest paring of the golden apple, and see what answer he will get from the Secretary of the Treasury, who has only six letters for the code of his office—
b a r t e r.

“My form of government shall be monarchical. Few laws, but those severely kept, plainly put down, and in the mother tongue, that every man may understand.” Legislation has been hard at work, for two centuries, in multiplying statutes that could not be administered, and heaping up enactments that could not be understood. It has been doing a little, too, with Commerce and Taxation, in a way that the plain-thinking John Burton does not recommend: “Of such wares as are transported or brought in, if they be necessary, commodious, and such as nearly concern man’s life, as corn, wood, coal,

and such provision as we cannot want, I will have little or no custom paid, no taxes." England's corn and meat taxes expired only in the last Parliament; and London's coal taxes yet oppress three or four millions, that there may be high festival amongst those who, of all men and all bodies of men, are "*fruges consumere nati*." Democritus would regulate the Church, too. "No impropriations, no lay patrons of church livings, or one private man; but common societies, corporations, &c., and those rectors of benefices to be chosen out of the Universities, examined and approved as the *literati* in China." Look at "The Clergy List," for 1854. In some things, however, our author is unreasonable. He says, "if it were possible, I would have such priests as would imitate Christ." He would have, too, "charitable lawyers that should love their neighbours as themselves." Nevertheless, he does take a practical view or so of legal affairs. "Judges and other officers shall be aptly disposed in each province, villages, cities, as common arbitrators to hear causes, and end all controversies." We have now County Courts; but how were controversies ended twenty years ago? How are they ended now in the Court of the subtlest learning and the best paid wisdom—the High Court of Chancery—to which Burton could not allude when he held "No controversy to depend above a year, but without all delays, and further appeals, to be speedily dispatched, and finally concluded in that time allotted"?

Amongst the other paradoxes of Democritus he holds "First scholars to take place, then soldiers; for I am of Vegetius his opinion, a scholar deserves better than a soldier, because '*Unius ætatis sunt quæ fortiter fiunt, quæ vero pro utilitate reipublicæ scribuntur, æterna.*'" * The honour-givers of our time know that all such assertions of the rights of literature come from literary men—partial judges of their own case. "*Cedant arma togæ*" is a foolish maxim. Let the fighters get peerages and ribbons—always provided that they beware the pen. There cannot be a greater proof of the superiority of our age to such prejudices as Burton propagated, when he put forth a claim to public reward for the man "that invents anything for public good in any art or science, or writes a Treatise."

What a singular notion has Burton of the recreations of the people! "As all conditions shall be tied to their task, so none shall be over tired, but have their set times of recreation and holidays—feasts and merry meetings, even to the meanest artificer, or basest servant, once a week to sing or dance, or do whatsoever he shall please. If any be drunk, he shall drink no more wine or strong drink in a twelve-month after." Our rule is that the meanest artificer or basest servant may have a holiday "once a week." But no recreations; no communing with Heaven in the fields; no going forth to look at mountains and lakes, in cheap boats; no familiarity

* Those who contend bravely are for an age: those who write for the good of the commonwealth, for all time.

with rare animals and plants in choice gardens ; no gazing upon great works of art, in which God speaks as in any other creation, in noble galleries. Nothing but strong drink, in dirty hovels where no sober man comes—drink in abundance once a week, always provided real happiness is not sought after.

“I will have weights and measures the same throughout.” How long have we had this uniformity ? “For defensive wars, I will have forces ready at a small warning, by land and sea.” The theory is questioned. “I will have no multiplicity of offices, of supplying by deputies.” It is not centuries ago since “the king’s turnspit was a member of Parliament.”* It is about ten years since the Six Clerks and the Sixty Clerks were abolished, with pensions enough to furnish endowments for the education of all the couples that in 1851 made their marks in the Parish Registers.

The poetical Commonwealth of Democritus junior is based upon his previous estimate of the madness of his generation. We have given a few sentences of his about legal improvements. He is rabid about lawyers—“gowned vultures,” as he calls them. But how truly he describes some evils that still exist amongst us, and which we still bear patiently ! “Our forefathers, as a worthy Chorographer of ours observes,† had wont, with a few golden crosses, and lines in verse, make all conveyances, assurances. And such was the candour and integrity of succeeding ages, that a deed, as I have

* Burke’s speech on Economical Reform. † Camden.

oft seen, to convey a whole manor, was *implicité* contained in some twenty lines, or thereabouts. But now many skins of parchment must scarce serve turn. He that buys and sells a house must have a house full of writings." And then come "contention and confusion;" and men go to law; and "I know not how many years before the cause is heard, and when 'tis judged and determined, by reason of some tricks and errors it is as fresh to begin, after twice seven years sometimes, as it was at first." Who shall say that this is obsolete?

He is not very tolerant, either, towards his own profession. "So many professed Christians, yet so few imitators of Christ—so many preachers, so little practice; such variety of sects, such have and hold of all sides—such absurd and ridiculous traditions and ceremonies. * * * On the adverse side, nice and curious schismatics in another extreme, abhorring all ceremonies." Others, "Formalists, out of fear and base flattery, like so many weathercocks turn round, a rout of temporisers, ready to embrace and maintain all that is or shall be proposed, in hope of preferment."

He is no flatterer, either, of those who sit in high places: "A poor sheep-stealer is hanged for stealing of victuals, compelled peradventure by necessity of that intolerable cold, hunger, and thirst, to save himself from starving: but a great man in office may securely rob whole provinces, undo thousands, pill and poll, oppress *ad libitum*, flea, grind, tyrannise, enrich himself by spoils of

the Commons, be uncontrollable in his actions, and, after all, be recompensed with turgent titles, honoured for his good service, and no man dare find fault or mutter at it."

The philosophers and scholars—"men above men, minions of the Muses"—fare little better. "They that teach wisdom, patience, meekness, are the veriest dizzards, hairbrains, and most discontent." "A good orator is a mere voice; his tongue is set to sale." "Poets are mad; a company of bitter satirists, detractors, or else parasitical applauders." "Your supercilious critics, grammatical triflers, note-makers, curious antiquaries, find out all the ruins of wit, *ineptiarum delicias*, amongst the rubbish of old writers; make books dear, themselves ridiculous, and do nobody good; yet if any man dare oppose or contradict, they are mad, up in arms on a sudden—how many sheets are written in defence, how bitter invectives, what apologies!" I could almost fancy the old satirist was pointing at Shakspeare commentators.

Burton lived before newspapers, and yet he had a very competent knowledge of what was going on in the world. I will conclude with a curious passage, which might, with few exceptions, have been written by one of our age of electric telegraphs: "Though I still live a collegiate student, as Democritus in his garden, and lead a monastic life, secluded from those tumults and troubles of the world, in some high place above you all, as he said,—I hear and see what is done abroad,—how others run, ride, tur-

moil, and macerate themselves in court and country, —a mere spectator of other men's fortunes and adventures, and how they act their parts, which methinks are diversely presented to me, as from a common theatre or scene. I hear new news every day, and those ordinary rumours of war, plagues, fires, inundations, thefts, murders, massacres, meteors, comets, spectrums, prodigies, apparitions ;—of towns taken, cities besieged, daily musters and preparations, and such like, which these tempestuous times afford : battles fought, so many slain, monomachies, shipwrecks, piracies and sea-fights, peace, leagues, stratagems, and fresh alarums. A vast confusion of vows, wishes, actions, edicts, petitions, law-suits, pleas, laws, proclamations, complaints, grievances, are daily brought to our ears. New books every day, pamphlets, currantoes, stories, whole catalogues of volumes of all sorts, new paradoxes, opinions, schisms, heresies, controversies in philosophy, religion, &c. Now come tidings of weddings, maskings, mummeries, entertainments, jubilees, embassies, tilts and tournaments, trophies, triumphs, revels, sports, plays. Then again, as in a new shifted scene, treasons, cheating tricks, robberies, enormous villainies in all kinds, funerals, burials, death of princes, new discoveries, expeditions ; now comical, then tragical matters. To-day we hear of new lords and offices created, to-morrow of some great men deposed, and then again of fresh honours conferred ; one is let loose, another imprisoned ; one purchaseth, another breaketh ; he

thrives, his neighbour turns bankrupt ; now plenty, then again dearth and famine ; one runs, another rides, wrangles, laughs, weeps, &c. Thus I daily hear, and such like, both private and public news, amidst the gallantry and misery of the world ; jollity, pride, perplexities and cares, simplicity and villainy, subtlety, knavery, candour and integrity, mutually mixed and offering themselves.”

Who, at first sight, would imagine that this was written—Once upon a Time—in the seventeenth century ?

“ The world pursues the very track
Which it pursued at its creation ;
And mortals shrink in horror back
From any hint of innovation :
From year to year the children do
Exactly what their sires have done ;
Time is ! Time was ! there 's nothing new,
There 's nothing new beneath the sun.”*

* W. M. Praed : Brazen Head.

MILTON, THE LONDONER.

THE best successor of Milton has described the character of the great poet's mind in one celebrated line :—

“ Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart.”

It might at first seem, looking at the accuracy of this forcible image, that the name of Milton could not be properly associated with the state of society during the times in which he flourished. It is true that in the writings of Milton we have very few glimpses of the familiar life of his day ; no set descriptions of scenes and characters ; nothing that approaches in the slightest degree to the nature of anecdote ; no playfulness, no humour. Wordsworth continues his apostrophe :—

“ Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea.”

The sprightlier dramatists have the voices of

“ Shallow rivers, by whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.”

It is pleasant to sit in the sunshine and listen to the bubbling of the runnel over its pebbly bottom : but the times of Milton were for the most part dark and stormy, and with them the voice of the sea was in harmony. We can learn, while listening to that

voice, when there was calm and when there was tempest. But Milton was not only the great literary name of his period—he was a public man, living in the heart of the mightiest struggle betwixt two adverse principles that England ever encountered. Add to this he was essentially a Londoner. He was born in Bread Street; he died in Cripplegate. During a long life we may trace him, from St. Paul's School, through a succession of London residences which, taking their names with their ordinary associations, sound as little poetical as can well be imagined—St. Bride's Churchyard, Aldersgate Street, Barbican, Holborn, Petty France, Bartholomew Close, Jewin Street, Bunhill Fields. The houses which he inhabited have been swept away; their pleasant gardens are built over. But the name of Milton is inseparably connected with these prosaic realities. That name belongs especially to London.

The Milton of nineteen has himself left us a picture of his mind at this period. His first Latin elegy, addressed to Charles Deodati, is supposed by Warton to have been written about 1627. The writer was born in 1608. We shall transcribe a few passages from Cowper's translation of this elegy:—

“ I well content, where Thames with influent tide
My native city laves, meantime reside:
Nor zeal nor duty now my steps impel
To reedy Cam, and my forbidden cell;
Nor aught of pleasure in those fields have I,
That, to the musing bard, all shade deny.

'T is time that I a pedant's threats disdain,
 And fly from wrongs my soul will ne'er sustain.
 If peaceful days in letter'd leisure spent,
 Beneath my father's roof, be banishment,
 Then call me banish'd; I will ne'er refuse
 A name expressive of the lot I choose.
 I would that, exiled to the Pontic shore,
 Rome's hapless bard had suffer'd nothing more;
 He then had equal'd even Homer's lays,
 And, Virgil! thou hadst won but second praise.
 For here I woo the Muse, with no control;
 For here my books—my life—absorb me whole."

His father's roof was in Bread Street, in the parish of Allhallows. The sign of the "Spread Eagle, which hung over his father's door, was the armorial bearing of his family; but the sign indicated that the house was one of business, and the business of Milton's father was that of a scrivener. Here, in some retired back room, looking most probably into a pleasant little garden, was the youthful poet surrounded by his books, perfectly indifferent to the more profitable writing of bonds and agreements that was going forward in his father's office. It was Milton's happiness to possess a father who understood the genius of his son, and whose tastes were in unison with his own. In the young poet's beautiful verses, *Ad Patrem*, also translated by Cowper, he says,—

" ——— thou never bad'st me tread
 The beaten path, and broad, that leads right on
 To opulence, nor didst condemn thy son
 To the insipid clamours of the bar,
 The laws voluminous, and ill observ'd."

Of Milton's father Aubrey says, "He was an ingenious man, delighted in music, and composed many songs now in print, especially that of *Oriana*." The poet thus addresses his father in reference to the same accomplishment :—

" ——— thyself
 Art skilful to associate verse with airs
 Harmonious, and to give the human voice
 A thousand modulations, heir by right
 Indisputable of Arion's fame.
 Now say, what wonder is it, if a son
 Of thine delight in verse ; if, so conjoin'd
 In close affinity, we sympathise
 In social arts and kindred studies sweet ?"

There was poetry then, and poetical associations, within Milton's home in the close city. Nor were poetical influences wanting without. The early writings of Milton teem with the romantic associations of his youth, and they have the character of the age sensibly impressed upon them. In the epistle to Deodati we have an ample description of that love of the drama, whether comedy or tragedy, which he subsequently connected with the pursuits of his mirthful and his contemplative man. To the student of nineteen,

" The grave or gay colloquial scene recruits
 My spirits spent in learning's long pursuits."

His descriptions of the comic characters in which he delights appear rather to be drawn from Terence than from Jonson or Fletcher. But in tragedy he pretty clearly points at Shakspeare's 'Romeo' and at

'Hamlet.' 'L'Allegro' and 'Il Penseroso' were probably written some four or five years after this epistle, when Milton's father had retired to Horton, and his son's visits to London were occasional. But "the well-trod stage" is still present to his thoughts. There is a remarkable peculiarity in all Milton's early poetry which is an example of the impressibility of his imagination under local circumstances. He is the poet, at one and the same time, of the city and of the country. In the epistle to Deodati he displays this mixed affection for the poetical of art and of nature :—

" Nor always city-pent, or pent at home,
I dwell; but, when spring calls me forth to roam,
Expatiate in our proud suburban shades
Of branching elm, that never sun pervades."

But London is thus addressed :—

" Oh city, founded by Dardanian hands,
Whose towering front the circling realms commands,
Too blest abode! no loveliness we see
In all the earth, but it abounds in thee."

Every reader is familiar with the exquisite rural pictures of 'L'Allegro;' but the scenery, without the slightest difficulty, may be placed in the immediate "suburban shades" which he has described in the epistle. It is scarcely necessary to remove them even as far as the valley of the Colne. The transition is immediate from the hedge-row elms, the russet lawns, the upland hamlets, and the nut-brown ale, to

" Tower'd cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold
 In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence, and judge the prize
 Of wit, or arms, while both contend
 To win her grace, whom all commend.
 There let Hymen oft appear
 In saffron robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp and feast and revelry,
 With mask and antique pageantry,—
 Such sights as youthful poets dream
 On summer-eyes by haunted stream.
 Then to the well-trod stage anon," &c.

So, in 'Il Penseroso,' there is a similar transition from the even-song of the nightingale, and the sullen roar of the far-off curfew, to

" The bellman's drowsy charm
 To bless the doors from nightly harm."

And there, in like manner, we turn from

" Arched walks of twilight groves
 And shadows brown,"

to

" ——— the high embowed roof
 With antic pillars massy proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light."

"No man," says Thomas Warton, "was ever so disqualified to turn Puritan as Milton." In these his early poems, according to this elegant critic, his expressed love of choral church music, of Gothic cloisters, of the painted windows and vaulted aisles

of a venerable cathedral, of tilts and tournaments, of masques and pageantries, is wholly repugnant to the anti-poetical principles which he afterwards adopted. We doubt exceedingly whether Milton can be held to have turned Puritan to the extent in which Warton accepts the term. Milton was a republican in politics, and an asserter of liberty of conscience, independent of Church government, in religion. But the constitution of his mind was utterly opposed to the reception of such extreme notions of moral fitness as determined the character of a Puritan. There has been something of exaggeration and mistake in this matter. For example: Warton, in a note on that passage in the epistle to Deodati in which Milton is supposed to allude to Shakspeare's tragedies, says, "His warmest poetical predilections were at last totally obliterated by civil and religious enthusiasm. Seduced by the gentle eloquence of fanaticism, he listened no longer to the 'wild and native wood-notes of Fancy's sweetest child.' In his 'Iconoclastes' he censures King Charles for studying 'one, whom we well know was the closet-companion of his solitudes, William Shakspeare.' This remonstrance, which not only resulted from his abhorrence of a king, but from his disapprobation of plays, would have come with propriety from Prynne or Hugh Peters. Nor did he now perceive that what was here spoken in contempt conferred the highest compliment on the elegance of Charles's private character." Mr. Waldron had the merit of pointing out, some fifty years

ago, that the passage in the 'Iconoclastes' to which Warton alludes gives not the slightest evidence of Milton's listening no longer to "Fancy's sweetest child," nor of reproaching Charles for having made Shakspeare the "closet-companion of his solitudes." Milton is arguing—with the want of charity certainly which belongs to an advocate—that "the deepest policy of a tyrant hath been ever to counterfeit religious;" and, applying this to the devotion of the 'Icon Basilike,' he thus proceeds:—"The poets also, and some English, have been in this point so mindful of decorum as to put never more pious words in the mouth of any person than of a tyrant. I shall not instance an abstruse author, wherein the King may be less conversant, but one whom we well know was the closet-companion of his solitudes, William Shakespeare, who introduces the person of Richard III. speaking in as high a strain of piety and mortification as is uttered in any passage in this book" (the 'Icon Basilike'). He then quotes a speech of Shakspeare's Richard III., and adds, "The poet used not much licence in departing from the truth of history." If Milton had meant to reproach Charles with being familiar with Shakspeare, the reproach would have recoiled upon himself, in evidencing the same familiarity. There was, in truth, scarcely a greater disparity between the clustering locks of Milton and the cropped hair of the Roundheads, than between his abiding love of poetry and music and the frantic denunciations of both by such as Prynne. Prynne, for example,

devotes a whole chapter of the 'Histrio-mastix' to a declamation against "effeminate, delicate, lust-provoking music," in which the mildest thing he quotes from the Fathers is, "Let the singer be thrust out of thy house as noxious; expel out of thy doors all fiddlers, singing-women, with all this choir of the devil, as the deadly songs of syrens." Compare this with Milton's sonnet, published in 1648, "To my Friend, Mr. Henry Lawes,"—the royalist Henry Lawes:—

" Harry, whose tuneful and well-measur'd song
First taught our English music how to span
Words with just note and accent, not to scan
With Midas' ears, committing short and long,
Thy worth and skill exempt thee from the throng,
With praise enough for envy to look wan;
To after age thou shalt be writ the man
That with smooth air couldst humour best our tongue."

Doubtless since 'Comus' was presented at Ludlow Castle in 1634, and Lawes composed and sung some of its lyrics, up to the period when Milton wrote the 'Iconoclastes,' the elegancies, the splendours, the high triumphs, the antique pageantries, which so captivated the youthful poet, had given place to sterner things. In his own mind, especially, that process of deep reflection was going forward which finally made him a zealous partisan and a bitter controversialist; but which was blended with purer and loftier aspirations than usually belong to politics or polemics. But his was an age of deep thinkers and resolute actors. The leaders and the

followers then of either party were sincere in their thoughts and earnest in their deeds. They were not a compromising and evasive generation. There was no mistaking their friendships or their enmities. Milton early chose his part in the great contention of his times. Amidst the classical imagery of Lycidas we have his bitter denunciations against the hirelings of the Church, who—

“ Creep and intrude and climb into the fold.”

He would not enter the service of that Church himself lest he should be called upon to “subscribe slave.” To that vocation, however, he says, “I was destined of a child and in mine own resolutions.” That he was impatient of what he considered the tyranny which interfered between a service so suited to his character was to be expected from the ardour of his nature ; but we can scarcely think that in those lines of Lycidas, written in 1637—

“ But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more ”—

he anticipates, as some have maintained, the execution of Archbishop Laud. Matters were scarcely then come to that pass. But yet Laud in 1637 had some unpleasant demonstrations of the temper of the times. In that year Bastwick, Burton, and Prynne were sentenced by the Star Chamber, “That each of the defendants should be fined five thousand pounds ; that Bastwick and Burton should stand in the pillory at Westminster, and there lose their

ears ; and that Prynne, having lost his ears before by sentence of this court, should have the remainder of his ears cut off, and should be branded on both cheeks with the letters S. L., to signify a seditious libeller." The execution to the tittle of this barbarous sentence maddened and disgusted those who looked upon the spectacle. Laud's Diary, for two months after this revolting exhibition, contains some very significant entries, recording the libels which it produced. A short libel pasted on the cross in Cheapside described him as the arch-wolf of Canterbury ; another, on the south gate of St. Paul's, informed the people that the devil had let that house to the Archbishop ; another, fastened to the north gate, averred that the government of the Church of England is a candle in the snuff going out in a stench. These were warnings ; but power is apt to look upon its own pomp, and forget that the day of humiliation and weakness may arise. Howell, in one of his letters written in the year of Laud's execution, says, " Who would have dreamt ten years since, when Archbishop Laud did ride in state through London streets, accompanying my Lord of London, to be sworn Lord High Treasurer of England, that the mitre should have now come to such a scorn, to such a national kind of hatred ?" In those eventful days such contrasts were not unfrequent ; and they sometimes followed each other much more closely than the triumphal procession of Laud, and his execution. On the 25th of November, 1641, the city of London welcomed

Charles from Scotland with an entertainment of unusual magnificence ; and the historian of the city, after revelling in his description of aldermen and liverymen, to the number of five hundred, mounted on horseback, with all the array of velvet and scarlet and golden chains,—of conduits running with claret,—of banquetings and loyal anthems, says, “the whole day seemed to be spent in a kind of emulation, with reverence be it spoken, between their Majesties and the City ; the citizens blessing and praying for their Majesties and their princely issue, and their Majesties returning the same blessings upon the heads of the citizens.” In 1642, not quite a year after these pleasant gratulations, Milton wrote the following noble sonnet :—

“ WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY.

“ Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
He can requite thee, for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these.
And he can spread thy name o’er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun’s bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses’ bow’r :
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tow’r
Went to the ground : and the repeated air
Of sad Electra’s poet had the pow’r
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.”

On the 25th of August, 1642, the King erected his standard on Nottingham Castle. Essex, as

Generalissimo of the Parliament forces, had already marched upon Northampton. The King's army was advancing towards the capital ; and London, with its vast suburbs, required to be put in a state of defence. It was on this occasion that the dogged resolution, the unflinching courage of the citizens of all ranks and all ages, manifested themselves in their willing labours to give London in some degree the character of a fortified city. The royalists ridiculed the citizens in their song of "Round-headed cuckolds, come dig." The battle of Edgehill was fought on the 23rd of October ; and on the 7th of November Essex returned to London. While the Parliament was negotiating, the sound of Prince Rupert's cannon was heard in the immediate neighbourhood of the capital ; and the citizens marched out to battle. But the bloody contest of Edgehill was not to be renewed at Brentford and Turnham Green. The King's forces retired ; and the trained-bands refreshed themselves and made merry with the good things which their careful wives had not forgotten to send after them in this hour of danger and alarm. It was upon this occasion that the sonnet which we have just transcribed was written. We might infer from the tone of this sonnet that Milton had little confidence that the arms of the citizens would be a sufficient protection for his "defenceless doors." He was living then in Aldersgate Street ; in that sort of house which was common in Old London, and which Milton always chose—a garden-house. This house might un-

questionably be called "the Muses' bower;" for here he was not only carrying on the education of his nephews and of the sons of a few intimate friends, but, as we learn from 'The Reason of Church Government,' he was preparing for some high work which should be of power "to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility; to allay the perturbation of the mind, and set the affections in right tune— * * * * a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite; nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame Memory and her syren daughters; but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." Cherishing high thoughts such as these, Milton called upon the assaulting soldier,

"Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bow'r."

Since his return from Italy, in 1639, his principles had been too openly proclaimed for him to appeal to

"Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,"

to spare the house of Milton the polemic. It was Milton the poet who left unwillingly "a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises

and hoarse disputes," that thus asked that the Muses' bower should be protected, as the house of Pindar and the city of Euripides had been spared. But London was saved from the assault; and a few months after the Common Council and the Parliament raised up much more formidable defences than invocations founded upon classical lore. All the passages and ways leading to the city were shut up, except those entering at Charing Cross, St. Giles's in the Fields, St. John Street, Shoreditch, and Whitechapel. The ends of these streets were fortified with breastworks and turn-pikes, musket proof; the city wall was repaired and mounted with artillery; finally an earthen rampart, with bastions, and redoubts, and all the other systematic defences of a beleaguered city, was carried entirely round London, Westminster, and Southwark.

In 1643 Milton married. Aubrey's account of this marriage and the subsequent separation is given with his characteristic quaintness:—"His first wife (Mrs. Powell, a Royalist) was brought up and lived where there was a great deal of company and merriment, dancing, &c. : and when she came to live with her husband at Mr. Russel's, in St. Bride's Churchyard, she found it very solitary; no company came to her, oftentimes heard his nephews beaten and cry. This life was irksome to her, so she went to her parents at Forest Hill. He sent for her (after some time), and I think his servant was evilly entreated; but as for wronging his bed,

I never heard the least suspicion, nor had he of that jealousy." In another place he says, "She was a zealous Royalist, and went without her husband's consent to her mother in the King's quarters near Oxford: two opinions do not well on the same bolster" Philips, Milton's relation, gives pretty much the same account of the matter. That such cases were not uncommon in an age distracted by controversial opinions in religion and politics may readily be imagined. The general argument of Milton's elaborate treatises on divorce is, that disagreements in temper and disposition, which tend to produce indifference or dislike, are sufficient to set aside the bond of marriage. The company and merriment, dancing, &c., in the midst of which Milton's wife was brought up, were inconsistent with his notions of pleasure and propriety. Aubrey tell us, "he was of a very cheerful humour. He would be cheerful even in his gout-fits, and sing." In his sonnet to Lawrence, written most probably when he was fifty, the same cheerfulness prevails:—

" What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?"

Again, in his sonnet to Cyriack Skinner:

" To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to dranch
In mirth, that after no repenting draws."

He adds, mild Heaven

“ ——— disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And when God sends a cheerful hour refrains.”

This was not Puritanism ; but neither was it the tumultuous merriment nor the secret licentiousness of the Cavaliers. The example of Milton may instruct us that the society of London was not to be wholly divided into these extreme classes. His plan of an academy, which Johnson calls impracticable, was founded, we have little doubt, upon a careful consideration of the desires and capacities of the intellectual class amongst whom he lived. There were other Englishmen in those days than fanatics and reprobates. He has eloquently described, in ‘The Liberty of unlicensed Printing,’ the thirst for knowledge, the ardent desire for truth, which prevailed in London even amidst the disorders of contending factions, the din of warfare, and the going forth of its sons and husbands to battle in a great cause :—“Behold now this vast city, a city of refuge, the mansion-house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his (God’s) protections. The shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation : others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the

force of reason and convincement. What could a man require more from a nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge?" Yet in the same wonderful composition he tells us plainly enough, and without any severity of rebuke, that London had its recreations and its lighter thoughts, amidst this "diligent alacrity in the pursuance of truth;" and that there were temptations which were only innocuous upon his principle, that "he that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warfaring Christian." The following graphic description of some of the social aspects of London is a remarkable exception to Milton's usual style of writing; and it almost tempts us to withdraw the remarks with which we introduced this paper, in which we spoke too slightly of Milton's power as a painter of manners:—"If we think to regulate printing, thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and pastimes, all that is delightful to man. No music must be heard, no song be set or sung, but what is grave and Doric. There must be licensing dancers, that no gesture, motion, or deportment be taught our youth, but what by their allowance shall be thought honest; for such Plato was provided of. It will ask more than the work of twenty licensers to examine all the lutes, the violins, and the guitars in every house; they must not be suffered to prattle as they do, but must be licensed what to say. And

who shall silence all the airs and madrigals that whisper softness in chambers? The windows also, and balconies, must be thought on; there are shrewd books, with dangerous frontispieces, set to sale; who shall prohibit them?—shall twenty licensers? The villages also must have their visitors, to inquire what lectures the bagpipe and the rebeck reads, even to the ballatry and the gammut of every municipal fiddler; for these are the countryman's Arcadias, and his Monte Mayors. Next, what more national corruption, for which England hears ill abroad, than household gluttony? who shall be the rector of our daily rioting? and what shall be done to inhibit the multitudes that frequent those houses where drunkenness is sold and harboured? Our garments also should be referred to the licensing of some sober workmasters, to see them cut into a less wanton garb. Who shall regulate all the mixed conversation of our youth, male and female together, as is the fashion of this country? Who shall still appoint what shall be discoursed, what presumed, and no farther? Lastly, who shall forbid and separate all idle resort, all evil company? These things will be, and must be; but how they shall be least hurtful, how least enticing, herein consists the grave and governing wisdom of a state. To sequester out of the world into Atlantis and Utopian politics, which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evil, in the midst whereof God hath placed us unavoidably."

Milton's reconciliation with his wife took place, it is recorded, in the house of a relation in St. Martin's-le-Grand. Committed as he was by his opinions on the general subject of divorce, he perhaps considered it fortunate that circumstances had prevented him acting upon them. He probably, had this trial been reserved to him, would have been an evidence of the hollowness of his own arguments. As it was, we hear no subsequent complaints; and his house afforded his wife's family a shelter when the advocates of the Royalist cause were exposed to persecution. It was in Barbican that Milton lived after his wife returned to him.

May I be pardoned for inserting a little poem which belongs to this domestic history:—

ELLEN AND MARY.

THE street-door is ajar, and Ellen enters.
 She pauses in the empty hall, for sounds
 Come, from the right, of music—soft, low sounds
 Of one preluding on the organ, rapt
 Into an ecstasy at his own touch.
 She pauses still; for, on the left, she hears
 A querulous voice, and then a long-drawn sigh:
 She opens the left-hand door—Mary sits weeping.
 “Yes, Ellen, I am wretched—I, the bride
 Two little months ago, am very wretched.
 I am a lonely woman: in the morning
 He drudges with his boys; then comes the dinner—
 A short, sad meal; and then—hear you that organ?—
 I hate those notes he calls ‘a winding bout
 Of linked sweetness.’ Then, at eventide,

He reads aloud some dismal tragedy,
Or puritanic sermon. I'm weary on't."

"Mary, I grieve for you ; but not because
Of what you think your loneliness. Believe me,
There's something heavier than a weary hour—
Heavier to bear in this new life of yours.
Forgive me, if I say the fault is one
That oft besets our sex—we seek delights
When man asks only sympathy. Knew you not
What manner of mind was his?—what earnestness?
Deep contemplation—proud and resolute will—
A poet's tenderness, but yet withal
The heroic heart, to do and suffer all things
For duty? Mary, you must mould your spirit
To his more lofty nature. Did he win you
By common blandishments—by bows and smiles?—
Talk'd he as Charles's cavaliers would talk,
When they danc'd at Forest-hill?"

"I thought him beautiful—
I knew him wise ; he held my soul subdued
To his most absolute power. I loved and trembled—
And yet I loved. I was a giddy girl,
Brought up in country pleasures. My heart yearns
For the old revelries. And, then, I dread
To listen to his talk, of kings discrown'd
For their misdoings, and of mitred bishops
Thrust from the altar. He is very stern.
Would I had never left my father's house!"

"Your father's house was a strange house for him
To find a wife in—so short a courtship, too!
But now your Husband's party must be yours,
And not your father's. 'T is an evil time—
Friend against friend, and brother against brother."

"My brothers are with the King ; they draw the
swords
Of loyal subjects. My husband does not fight,
Save with the pen ; but he writes bitter words—

Foul, rebel words, they say. I cannot read them :
I will not listen when he eagerly paces
The garden up and down, declaiming loud
His eloquent sentences, of Liberty,
And private Judgment—and I know not what.
Would I had never left my father's house ! ”

A year has gone since Mary was a bride.
She sits at her father's hearth. The autumn flowers
Have perish'd at Forest-hill, and now the earliest
Are blooming there. Mary has gather'd both—
Fled from her Husband. A false cheerfulness
Flickers about her face ; there is no radiance
Of inward peace now beaming from her eyes.
Ofttimes is gaiety within that house :
Lovelocks are floating in the midnight dance ;
Cups are there drain'd, with tipsy shouts of joy
At rumours of success, and threats of vengeance
Pour'd forth with curses, as some news is heard
Of rebel daring. The King's quarters are nigh,
Some five miles off, at Oxford. Volunteers,
And plumed ensigns, reckless, fiery spirits,
Hover round Mary. There are sometimes sneers
Whisper'd, not very low, at widow'd wives ;
And some would think that freedoms might be safe.
But Mary keeps her innocence : the mind
Undisciplin'd and weak, is gathering strength.
At first she never uses her Husband's name :
She is plain Mary. Now and then she hears
Men speak that name in hatred ; but they speak
With fear, too, of his might. There comes one thither
Who loved him once ; they parted in deep anger.
Milton and Cleveland went their several ways.
But Cleveland speaks no bitter word to Mary
Of that old College friend. He has within him
The poet's yearnings ; and the nobleness
With which a poet bows before the genius

Even of a rival and an enemy.
 Though wassail, and the license of the camp,
 Made him a scorner and a ballad-monger,
 He scorn'd not him who wrote that lofty book
 The 'Areopagitica.' Mary hears
 From him some gentle memories of the man
 Whose soul had awed her. Then remorse creeps in ;
 And she daily weeps to think what cold replies
 Her stubbornness had given his mild requests,
 And then his brief commands, for her return.

The summer comes. Fear is within that house
 Where late was revelry—galliards and country-rounds,
 And moonlit madrigals on dewy lawns.
 Fear now abides there, for the news has reach'd
 Of Naseby field. Ruin is drawing near.
 The sequestrators come ; and Mary's father
 Hurries to London.

Ellen is sitting in her father's house—
 A garden-house, in the City. She is reading.
 A grave and learned book is on her knee—
 'The Doctrine and the Discipline of Divorce.'
 "Down, idle fancies ! Perish, wicked thoughts !
 Thou great logician, thou hast steep'd thy argument
 In the deep dye of thy hopes. I could hope, too ;
 But I will strive against temptation. Lord,
 Forgive my erring and tumultuous thoughts !
 It cannot be—it is not true—that difference
 Of temper—incompatibility—make
 A cause of final separation. Yet
 How hard it is ! ———
 It is not just ; for what a crowd would rush,
 Upon that plea, to sever household ties,
 Play false with oaths ———"

Mary is on the threshold.

Another minute, and she bathes the cheek
 Of Ellen with hot tears.

“ I knew him not—
 Knew not his greatness—nor his gentleness.
 I wrong'd him, Ellen ; yet he hath redeem'd
 My father from deep ruin. Will he spurn me ?
 Yes, he will spurn me. Ellen, I would ask
 Forgiveness, and then die.”

The book is shut.

Another morn, and Mary's Husband comes
 At Ellen's bidding. There is mystery.
 A sob—and then a silence—then a rush.
 Mary is kneeling at her Husband's feet,
 And Ellen joins their hands.

In 1647 Milton had again moved to a small house in Holborn, which opened behind into Lincoln's Inn Fields. He here continued to work in the education of a few scholars :—

“ So didst thou travel on life's common way
 In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.”

But within two years Milton was called to higher occupation. In the Council-books at the State Paper Office, some extracts from which were first published in the preface to Dr. Sumner's translation of Milton's 'De Doctrina Christiana,' there is this entry, under date of November 12, 1649 :
 “ Ordered that Sir John Hippesley is spoken to that Mr. Milton may be accommodated with the lodgings that he hath at Whitehall.” And on the following 19th of November :—“ That Mr. Milton shall have the lodgings that were in the hands of Sir John Hippesley in Whitehall, for his accom-

modation, as being secretary to the Council for Foreign Languages." Here, then, was Milton, after having written the 'Tenure of Kings and Magistrates,' and the 'Iconoclastes,' fixed upon the very spot where, according to his own account, a "most potent King, after he had trampled upon the laws of the nation, was finally, by the supreme council of the kingdom, condemned to die, and beheaded before the very gate of the royal palace ;"* but where, according to those who took a different view of the matter, a "black tragedy was acted, which filled most hearts among us with consternation and horror."* After the sword was drawn and the scabbard thrown away, the Whitehall which Milton must have had in his mind when he wrote of

" Throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace,"

was deserted ; its courts were solitary, its chambers were vacant ; their hangings rotted on the walls ; their noble pictures were covered with dust and cobweb. Howell tells a remarkable story about the desolation of the favourite palace of James and Charles :—"I send you these following prophetic verses of Whitehall, which were made above twenty years ago to my knowledge, upon a book called 'Balaam's Ass,' that consisted of some invectives against King James and the court *in statu quo tunc*. It was composed by one Mr.

* Defensio pro Populo Anglicano.

† Howell's Letters.

Williams, a counsellor of the Temple, but a Roman Catholic, who was hanged, drawn, and quartered at Charing Cross for it; and I believe there be hundreds that have copies of these verses ever since that time about the town yet living. They were these :—

‘Some seven years since Christ rid to court,
And there he left his ass,
The courtiers kick’d him out of doors,
Because they had no grass :
The ass went mourning up and down,
And thus I heard him bray,—
If that they could not give me grass,
They might have given me hay :
But sixteen hundred forty-three,
Whosoe’er shall see that day,
Will nothing find within that court
But only grass and hay.’

Which was found to happen true in Whitehall, till the soldiers coming to quarter there trampled it down.”

Milton was settled in Whitehall little more than two years. Within six months of his establishment there he received from the Council a warrant to the trustees and contractors for the sale of the King’s goods, to deliver to him such hangings as should be sufficient for the furnishing of his lodgings. In 1651 the Council and the Committee of Parliament for Whitehall were at issue with regard to Milton’s remaining in these lodgings; and the Council appointed a Committee to endeavour with the Committee of Parliament, “that the said Mr. Milton may be continued where he is, in regard of

the employment he is in to the Council, which necessitates him to reside near the Council." But he left these lodgings. From 1652, till within a few weeks of the restoration of Charles II. in 1660, he resided in Petty France, Westminster, in the house "next door to the Lord Scudamore's, and opening into St. James's Park." He held the office of Foreign Secretary till 1655. In April the 17th of that year the following entry is found in the Council-books:—"Ordered that the former yearly salary of Mr. John Milton, of two hundred and eighty-eight pounds, &c., formerly charged on the Council's contingencies, be reduced to one hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and paid to him during his life out of his Highness's Exchequer." This reduced payment was no doubt a retiring pension to Milton; and the reasons for that retirement are sufficiently pointed out in his second sonnet to Skinner, written in 1655:—

"Cyriack, this three years day these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heav'n's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty's defence, my noble task,
O which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask.
Content, though blind, had I no better guide."

The European fame of the author of the ' *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* ' was not overstated by the poet. Aubrey says, " He was mightily importuned to go into France and Italy ; foreigners came much to see him and much admired him, and offered to him great preferments to come over to them ; and the only inducement of several foreigners that came over into England was chiefly to see O. Protector and Mr. J. Milton ; and would see the house and chamber where he was born. He was much more admired abroad than at home." Milton must indeed have felt that, during the four or five years in which he communicated to foreign nations, in his own powerful and majestic style, the wishes and opinions of a strong and resolved government, he was filling a part which, however obnoxious might be his principles, could not forbear to command the respect of the highest-minded men of all countries. As Milton continued to reside in Westminster for several years after he had been compelled by blindness to resign his office, there is little doubt that his intimacy was close and confidential, not only with his own immediate friends, Marvell, and Skinner, and Harrington, who according to Anthony Wood belonged with him to the political club which met at the Turk's Head in Palace Yard—but with the more powerful leaders in the Commonwealth, and with "Cromwell, our chief of men." The celebrity of the Rota Club gave rise probably to the assertion that "Milton and some other creatures of the Commonwealth had instituted the

Calves' Head Club,"* which met on the 30th of January to revile the memory of Charles I. by profane ribaldry and mock solemnities. Milton, however stern a controversialist, was of too lofty a nature to stoop to such things. Pepys, in his Diary of January 1660, gives us a pretty adequate notion of the nature of the proceedings at this political club, the Rota, of which Harrington was the founder:—"I went to the Coffee Club, and heard very good discourse; it was in answer to Mr. Harrington's answer, who said that the state of the Roman government was not a settled government, and so it was no wonder that the balance of prosperity was in one hand, and the command in another, it being therefore always in a posture of war: but it was carried by ballot that it was a steady government, though it is true by the voices it had been carried before that it was an unsteady government; so to-morrow it is to be proved by the opponents that the balance lay in one hand and the government in another." All this, after the real business of the Long Parliament, looks like boys' play; but it was one mode by which the heat of political theorists quietly smouldered away without explosion. Wood says, "The discourses of the members about government and ordering a commonwealth were the most ingenious and smart that ever were heard; for the arguments in the Parliament House were but flat to them." Yet these smart and ingenious things told for little

* Secret History of the Calves' Head Club. Harleian Miscellany.

when the genius of Cromwell was no more. While Harrington was declaiming, Monk was bringing in Charles II. The Rump Parliament, which had overthrown the feeble government of Richard Cromwell, was very shortly after cast down by the force of popular opinion. Pepys describes the following city scene on the 11th of February, 1660, after Monk had bearded the Parliament:—"In Cheapside there was a great many bonfires; and Bow-bells and all the bells in all the churches were a-ringing. Hence we went homewards, it being about ten at night. But the common joy that was everywhere to be seen! the number of bonfires! there being fourteen between St. Dunstan's and Temple Bar; and at Strand Bridge I could at one time tell thirty fires. In King Street seven or eight: and all along burning, and roasting, and drinking for rumps, there being rumps tied upon sticks and carried up and down. The butchers at the Maypole in the Strand rang a peal with their knives when they were going to sacrifice their rump. On Ludgate Hill there was one turning of the spit that had a rump tied upon it, and another basting." These were symptoms that could not be mistaken. In three months after Charles was on the throne; and Milton was proscribed. Up to the last moment he had lifted up his voice against what he called "the general defection of a misguided and abused multitude." In the 'Ready and Easy Way to establish a Free Commonwealth' we have almost his last words of solemn exhorta-

tion in connection with public affairs :—"What I have spoken is the language of that which is not called amiss, the good old cause : if it seem strange to any, it will not seem more strange, I hope, than convincing to backsliders : thus much I should perhaps have said, though I were sure I should have spoken only to trees and stones, and had none to cry to but with the prophet, 'O earth, earth, earth !' to tell the very soil itself what her perverse inhabitants are deaf to. Nay, though what I have spoke should happen (which Thou suffer not who didst create mankind free ! nor Thou next who didst redeem us from being servants of men !) *to be the last words of our expiring liberty.*" This was prophetic. For thirty years no such words were again heard ; and in 'Paradise Lost' there is but one solitary allusion to his position, with reference to public affairs and public manners :—

" More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues ;
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east : still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice ; nor could the muse defend
Her son."

Milton, upon the Restoration, was in hiding, it is said, at a friend's house in Bartholomew Close. He was well concealed; for the proclamation for his apprehension, and that of Goodwin, says, "The said John Milton and John Goodwin are so fled, or so obscure themselves, that no endeavours used for their apprehension can take effect, whereby they may be brought to legal trial, and deservedly receive condign punishment for their treasons and offences." Johnson thinks that the escape of Milton was favoured. Unquestionably his judicial murder would have been the most disgraceful act of the restored government. It is said that in 1650 Milton saved the royalist Davenant, and that in 1660 Davenant saved the republican Milton. Milton's 'Iconoclastes' and 'Defensio' were burnt by the common hangman; but he was rendered safe by the Act of Indemnity.

We have thus very hastily and imperfectly traced Milton through his public life. In the remaining fourteen years he was perhaps happier than in the confident and cheerful thoughts of his active existence. He was then truly "like a star, and dwelt apart." He was wholly devoted to the accomplishment of those great labours which he had shadowed forth in his youth. He clung to London with an abiding love, and from 1660 to 1665 he lived in Holborn and Jewin Street. During this period he completed 'Paradise Lost.' When the great plague broke out he found a retreat at Chalfont. From this period his abode, up to the time

of his death in 1674, was in Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields. It was here that Dryden visited him. Aubrey records this visit; and amongst "his familiar learned acquaintance" mentions "Jo. Dryden, Esq., Poet Laureat, who very much admired him, and went to him to have leave *to put his 'Paradise Lost' into a drama in rhyme*. Mr. Milton received him civilly, and told him he would give him leave *to tag his verses*."

LUCY HUTCHINSON.

THE 'Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson' is a book to be loved. In many passages it is tedious—a record of petty strategies of partisan warfare—and, more dreary still, of factious jealousies and polemical hatreds. The absolute truth of the book is fatal, in one direction, to our hero-worship. The leaders of the Great Rebellion, in such minute details, appear as mere schemers as rival agents at a borough election ; and the most fervent in professions of religious zeal are as bitter in their revenges as the heroes of a hundred scalps. But there arises out of the book, and is evermore associated with it, the calm quiet shadow of a woman of exquisite purity, of wondrous constancy, of untiring affection,—Lucy Hutchinson, its writer.

John Hutchinson is at Richmond, lodging at the house of his music-master. He is twenty-two years of age. The village is full of "good company," for the young Princes are being educated in the palace, and many "ingenious persons entertained themselves at that place." The music-master's house is the resort of the king's musicians ; "and divers of the gentlemen and ladies that were

affected with music came thither to hear." There was a little girl "tabled" in the same house with John Hutchinson, who was taking lessons of the lutanist—a charming child, full of vivacity and intelligence. She told John she had an elder sister—a studious and retiring person—who was gone with her mother, Lady Apsley, into Wiltshire—and Lucy was going to be married, she thought. The little girl ever talked of Lucy—and the gentleman talked of Lucy—and one day a song was sung which Lucy had written—and John and the vivacious child walked, another day, to Lady Apsley's house, and there, in a closet, were Lucy's Latin books. Mr. Hutchinson grew in love with Lucy's image; and when the talk was more rife that she was about to be married—and some said that she was indeed married—he became unhappy—and "began to believe there was some magic in the place, which enchanted men out of their right senses; but the sick heart could not be chid nor advised into health." At length Lucy and her mother came home; and Lucy was not married. Then John and Lucy wandered by the pleasant banks of the Thames, in that spring-time of 1638, and a "mutual friendship" grew up between them. Lucy now talked to him of her early life; how she had been born in the Tower of London, of which her late father, Sir John Apsley, was the governor; how her mother was the benefactress of the prisoners, and delighted to mitigate the hard fortune of the noble and learned, and especially

Sir Walter Raleigh, by every needful help to his studies and amusements; how she herself grew serious amongst these scenes, and delighted in nothing but reading, and would never practise her lute or harpsichords, and absolutely hated her needle. John was of a like serious temper. Their fate was determined.

The spring is far advanced into summer. On a certain day, the friends on both sides meet to conclude the terms of the marriage. Lucy is not to be seen. She has taken the small-pox. She is very near death. At length John is permitted to speak to his betrothed. Tremblingly and mournfully she comes into his presence. She is "the most deformed person that could be seen." Who could tell the result in words so touching as Lucy's own? "He was nothing troubled at it, but married her as soon as she was able to quit the chamber, when the priest and all that saw her were affrighted to look on her. But God recompensed his justice and constancy by restoring her; though she was longer than ordinary before she recovered to be as well as before."

They were married on the 3rd of July, 1638.

In the autumn of 1641, John and Lucy Hutchinson are living in their own house of Owthorpe, in Nottinghamshire. They have two sons. They are "peaceful and happy." John has dedicated two years since his marriage to the study of "school divinity." He has convinced himself of "the

great point of predestination." This faith has not, as his wife records, produced a "carelessness of life in him," but "a more strict and holy walking." He applies himself, in his house at Owthorpe, "to understand the things then in dispute" between the King and Parliament. He is satisfied of the righteousness of the Parliament's cause; but he then "contents himself with praying for peace." In another year the King has set up his standard at Nottingham; the battle of Edgehill has been fought; all hope of peace is at an end. John Hutchinson is forced out of his quiet habitation by the suspicions of his royalist neighbours. He is marked as a Roundhead. Lucy does not like the name. "It was very ill applied to Mr. Hutchinson, who, having naturally a very fine thickset head of hair, kept it clean and handsome, so that it was a great ornament to him; although the godly of those days, when he embraced their party, would not allow him to be religious because his hair is not in their cut." The divinity student now becomes a lieutenant-colonel. He raises a company of "very honest godly men." The Earl of Chesterfield is plundering the houses of the Puritans in the Vale of Belvoir, near Owthorpe; and the young colonel has apprehensions for the safety of his family. In the depth of winter a troop of horse arrive one night at the lonely house where Lucy and her children abide. They are hastily summoned to prepare for an instant journey. They are to ride to Nottingham before sunrise, for the soldiers are

not strong enough to march in the day. Lucy is henceforth to be the companion of her husband in his perilous office—his friend, his comforter—a ministering angel amongst the fierce and dangerous spirits, whom he sways by a remarkable union of courage and gentleness.

Let us look at the shadow of Lucy Hutchinson. She tranquilly sits in one of the upper chambers of the old and ruinous castle of which her husband is appointed governor. It is a summer evening of 1643. In that tower, built upon the top of the rock, tradition says that Queen Isabel received her paramour Mortimer ; and at the base of the rock are still shown Mortimer's Well, and Mortimer's Hole, as Lucy Hutchinson saw them two centuries ago. She looks out of the narrow windows by which her chamber is lighted. There is the Trent, peacefully flowing on one side, amidst flat meadows. On the other is the town of Nottingham. The governor has made the ruinous castle a strong fortress, with which he can defy the Cavaliers should they occupy the town beneath. Opposite the towers is the old church of St. Nicholas, whose steeple commands the platform of the castle. The governor has sent away his horse, and many of his foot, to guard the roads by which the enemy could approach Nottingham. There is no appearance of danger. The reveille is beat. Those who have been watching all night lounge into the town. It is in the possession of the Cavaliers. The scene is changed. The din of ordnance rouses Lucy from

her calm gaze upon the windings of the Trent. For five days and nights there is firing without intermission. Within the walls of the castle there are not more than eighty men. The musqueteers on St. Nicholas' steeple pick off the cannoneers at their guns.

Now and then, as the assailants are beaten from the walls, they leave a wounded man behind, and he is dragged into the castle. On the sixth day, after that terrible period of watchfulness, relief arrives. The Cavaliers are driven from the town with much slaughter, and the castle is filled with prisoners. Lucy has not been idle during these six days of peril. There is a task to be performed,—a fitting one for woman's tenderness. Within the castle was a dungeon called the Lion's Den, into which the prisoners were cast; and as they were brought up from the town, two of the fanatical ministers of the garrison reviled and maltreated them. Lucy reads the commands of her Master after another fashion. As the prisoners are carried bleeding to the Lion's Den, she implores that they should be brought in to her, and she binds up and dresses their wounds. And now the two ministers mutter—and their souls abhor to see this favour done to the enemies of God—and they teach the soldiers to mutter. But Lucy says, "I have done nothing but my duty. These are our enemies, but they are our fellow-creatures. Am I to be upbraided for these poor humanities?" And then she breathes a thanksgiving to Heaven that her

mother had taught her this humble surgery. There is a tear in John's eye as he gazes on this scene. That night the Cavalier officers sup with him, rather as guests than as prisoners.

' In the Vale of Belvoir, about seven miles from Belvoir Castle, is the little village of Owthorpe. When Colonel Hutchinson returned to the house of his fathers, after the war was ended, he found it plundered of all its moveables—a mere ruin. In a few years it is a fit dwelling for Lucy to enjoy a life-long rest, after the terrible storms of her early married days. There is no accusing spirit to disturb their repose. John looks back upon that solemn moment when he signed the warrant for the great tragedy enacted before Whitehall without remorse. He had prayed for "an enlightened conscience," and he had carried out his most serious convictions. He took no part in the despotic acts that followed the destruction of the monarchy. He had no affection for the fanatics who held religion to be incompatible with innocent pleasures and tasteful pursuits. At Owthorpe, then, he lived the true life of an English gentleman. He built—he planted—he adorned his house with works of art—he was the just magistrate—the benefactor of the poor. The earnest man who daily expounded the Scriptures to his household was no ascetic. There was hospitality within those walls—with music and revelry. The Puritans looked gloomily and suspiciously upon the dwellers at Owthorpe.

The Cavaliers could not forgive the soldier who had held Nottingham Castle against all assaults.

The Restoration comes. The royalist connexions of Lucy Hutchinson have a long struggle to save her husband's life ; but he is finally included in the Act of Oblivion. He is once more at Owthorpe, without the compromise of his principles. He has done with political strife for ever.

On the 31st of October, 1663, there is a coach waiting before the hall of Owthorpe. That hall is filled with tenants and labourers. Their benefactor cheerfully bids them farewell ; but his wife and children are weeping bitterly. That coach is soon on its way to London with the husband and wife, and their eldest son and daughter. At the end of the fourth day's journey, at the gates of that fortress within which she had been born, Lucy Hutchinson is parted from him whose good and evil fortunes she has shared for a quarter of a century.

About a mile from Deal stands Sandown Castle. In 1664, Colonel Hutchinson is a prisoner within its walls. It was a ruinous place, not weatherproof. The tide washed the dilapidated fortress ; the windows were unglazed ; cold, and damp, and dreary was the room where the proud heart bore up against physical evils. For even here there was happiness. Lucy is not permitted to share his prison ; but she may visit him daily. In the town of Deal abides that faithful wife. She is with him

at the first hour of the morning ; she remains till the latest of night. In sunshine or in storm, she is pacing along that rugged beach, to console and be consoled.

Eleven months have thus been passed, when Lucy is persuaded by her husband to go to Owthorpe to see her children.

“ When the time of her departure came, she left with a very sad and ill-presaging heart.” In a few weeks John Hutchinson is laid in the family vault in that Vale of Belvoir.

Lucy Hutchinson sits in holy resignation in the old sacred home. She has a task to work out. She has to tell her husband’s history, for the instruction of her children :—“ I that am under a command not to grieve at the common rate of desolate women, while I am studying which way to moderate my woe, and if it were possible, to augment my love, can, for the present, find out none more just to your dear father, nor consolatory to myself, than the preservation of his memory.”

ASTROLOGICAL ALMANACS.

THE stormy period from the rupture of Charles I. with his Parliament to the Revolution, was the golden age of astrology in England. James I., "the wisest fool in Christendom," did little more for "the art" than to grant the monopoly of promulgating its absurdities in almanacs to the Universities and the Stationers' Company. As a matter of state craft, this was a politic measure. Almanacs have always had a considerable influence upon the opinions of the common people ; and it was, therefore, prudent to secure the compliance of a powerful body of men with the wishes of the ruling authority. The French government, half a century earlier, had forbidden the almanac-makers to prophesy at all : but it was a more subtle device to render the liberty of prophesying profitable to those who would take especial care that their "old men should dream dreams" after that holy and legitimate fashion which should give "the right divine of kings" the last and best varnish of superstition, wherewith it might shine and look lovely in the eyes of the ignorant multitude. The Universities, to their honour be it spoken, grew ashamed of their participation in this pious work ; but they were not ashamed of the lucre which their share of

the monopoly produced. They sold their right to the Stationers' Company; and that company earned their title to this and other privileges so fully, that in the next century they had the honour of being called "the literary constables to the Star Chamber, to suppress all the science and information to which we owe our freedom."

But Charles I. did even more than his sapient father. He not only encouraged astrology, but he affected to believe in it. He raised up Lilly and Gadbury from the low condition in which they were born, to publish the 'Royal Horoscope,' and to threaten disobedient subjects with malignant aspects of the stars. But Charles could not secure even the loyalty of the astrologers. The Stationers' Company always had especial reason for being on the side of the ruling power. They could always see clearly, "by the help of excellent glasses," who would be lord of the ascendant. They prophesied for Cromwell as they had prophesied for Charles; they sang 'Te Deum' for the Restoration, as they had done for the Protectorate; and although they dated their little books from the year "of our deliverance by King William from popery and arbitrary government," they had not forgotten to invoke the blessings of the planets upon the last of the Stuarts; and to prognosticate all the evils of comets and eclipses upon those who resisted his paternal sway.

Lilly was unquestionably the prince of the powers of the air in those glorious days of horo-

scopes and witch-burnings. He was originally a domestic servant ; but he was not satisfied to tell fortunes to the wenches of the kitchen, or to predict the recovery of a stolen spoon. In 1633 he boldly published the horoscope of Charles I., at the period when that unfortunate prince was crowned king of Scotland. Charles had either too much weakness or too much cunning to put the impostor in the pillory, as one might have expected from the friend of Strafford and the patron of Rubens. The astrologer was for years in the habit of giving counsel to the monarch. Whether he predicted evil or good in their private moments we are not informed ; but the presumption is that astrologers could flatter as well as lords of the bedchamber. It is doubtful whether Charles found as much truth in the predictions of Lilly, as when he consulted the *Sortes Virgilianæ*, with Falkland, at Oxford. The old impostor, however, was not content to be cabinet counsellor of the king. In 1644 he began to prophesy for the ear of the whole world ; and he went onward through good report and evil report till he acquired a considerable fortune, bought an estate at Hersham, near Walton-upon-Thames, and died there in 1681. In his old age he became cautious in his prophecies ; and was fearful, according to his own words, “of launching out too far into the deep, lest he should give offence.” There is no doubt, however, of his semi-belief in his art. He deluded others till he was himself deluded.

Gadbury, who was originally the pupil of Lilly, became eventually his arch-rival and enemy ; and when the one published his 'Merlinus Anglicus,' the other had his 'Anti-Merlinus.' Lilly, some three or four years before he was removed to learn the value of all attempts to penetrate into futurity, from the lessons of "the great teacher Death," thought fit to contradict "all flying reports" of his decease, "spread abroad for some years past." The astrologers of that day had a wicked trick of vilifying each other, by anticipating the summons of the Fates ; and thus Lilly himself, when he could not write down Gadbury, announced to the world that his disciple, whom he proscribed as a monster of ingratitude, had perished in the passage to Barbadoes. But Gadbury outlived his master ten years, very much to his own satisfaction. He had a narrow escape in the days of Titus Oates, for he was a staunch Catholic, and had no belief in the "horrid, popish, jacobite plot," from the epoch of which Partridge dated to our own day. Partridge hated Gadbury as much as Gadbury hated Lilly ; and when Gadbury died, Partridge published the history of what he called "his Black Life." But though Gadbury was dead, the Stationers, according to their most indubitable privilege in all such cases, continued to publish his almanacs, till another Gadbury (Job) succeeded to the honours and emoluments of his worthy relative, and prophesied through another generation of most credulous dupes.

Swift has conferred an immortality upon John

Partridge, whom he killed as an almanac-maker in 1709. The old man, at the time when this wicked wit assailed him, had been nearly forty years labouring in his vocation. He appears, originally, to have been a harmless, and, for an almanac-maker, somewhat sensible person. When Swift assailed him he had passed his grand climacteric; and though the almanac perished in this memorable affray, the man lived for six years after Bickerstaff had killed him. But when Partridge refused any longer to predict, the Stationers' Company did not choose to be laughed out of the profit of his reputation for prediction. They accordingly, in 1710, printed a Partridge's almanac, with Partridge's portrait, which Partridge never wrote. During the three succeeding years the publication was discontinued; but in 1714, the year before the mortal part of the astrologer died, Partridge's '*Merlinus Liberatus*' again made its appearance; and went dragging on a decrepit existence, with the sins of a century and a half upon its head.

Swift's account of Partridge's death is one of the most pungent pieces of solemn humour which the genius of that most terrific of controversialists ever produced. No wonder that it killed the almanac for a season, though the man escaped. The confession of the astrologer is admirable:—" 'I am a poor ignorant fellow, bred to a mean trade, yet I have sense enough to know, that all pretences of foretelling by astrology are deceits, for this manifest reason—because the wise and learned, who can

only judge whether there be any truth in this science, do all unanimously agree to laugh at and despise it; and none but the poor ignorant vulgar give it any credit, and that only upon the word of such silly wretches as I and my fellows, who can hardly write or read.' I then asked him, why he had not calculated his own nativity, to see whether it agreed with Bickerstaff's prediction. At which he shook his head, and said, 'Oh! sir, this is no time for jesting, but for repenting these fooleries, as I do now from the very bottom of my heart!' 'By what I can gather from you,' said I, 'the observations and predictions you printed with your almanacs were mere impositions on the people?' He replied, 'if it were otherwise, I should have the less to answer for. We have a common form for all these things; as to foretelling the weather, we never meddle with that, but leave it to the printer, who takes it out of any old almanac, as he thinks fit.'"

It is a hundred and forty years since this attack, which one would have thought irresistible, was levelled against the prophecy-makers of the Stationers' Company; but these fooleries still exist amongst us. At the time of Swift, the greater part of the astrologers of the civil wars had long been dead; but the almanacs, which were issued from this great patent store-house of imposture, bore the names of their original authors. "Poor Robin, Dove, Wing, and several others do yearly publish their almanacs, though several of them have been dead since before

the Revolution." The individual men were gone ; but the spirit of delusion, which they had originally breathed into their works, was not extinguished by their death, for the *corporation* of the Stationers' Company could never die.

Francis Moore, "Physician," began his career of imposture in 1698; and, by the condensation within himself of all the evil qualities of his contemporaries, he gradually contrived to extinguish the lives, and then, with a true vampire-spirit, to prey upon the carcasses, even up to the present hour, of Lilly, Gadbury, Lord, Andrews, Woodhouse, Dade, Pond, Bucknall, Pearce, Coelson, Perkins, and Parker,—the illustrious and the obscure cheats of the seventeenth century. One hundred and fifty-five years is a pretty long career of imposture. Poor Robin, the hoary jester of the fraternity, gave up the ghost a quarter of a century ago, after a life of iniquity longer than that of Old Parr or Henry Jenkins. Heaven avert the omen from Francis Moore!

As the old astrologers died in the body, and their spirits, after lingering awhile near 'Paul's,' reposed also, the Stationers' Company raised up new candidates for the emoluments and honours of their trade of "using subtil craft to deceive and impose on his Majesty's subjects." At the beginning of the late King's reign, Andrews, and Parker, and Pearce, and Partridge, and Moore, were still flourishing, of the old set; but the more glorious names were gone to enjoy the celestial converse of Albumazar and Raymond Lully. Their places were

filled (how ignoble !) by Saunders and Season, and Tycho Wing. Even these are gone. Moore alone remains upon this wicked earth, where common sense walks abroad and laughs at him as the forlorn mummer of a by-gone generation. He now belongs to "ONCE UPON A TIME."

MAY-FAIR.

THIS region of fashion was, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, a large field, extending from Park Lane almost to Devonshire House, in the West ; and comprising the space to the North where the famous Lord Chesterfield, in the middle of that century, built his magnificent mansion, and looked with pride upon his spacious garden from the windows of his noble library. The brook of Tyburn ran through this district, so that the place was also called Brook Field, which name is still preserved in Brook Street. In this Brook Field was held an Annual Fair, commencing on the 1st of May, which, without going back into more remote antiquity, had been not only a market for all commodities, but a place of fashionable resort, in the early years of the Restoration. Mr. Pepys was a visitor there in 1660.

The general character of May-Fair may be gathered from an advertisement of the 27th of April, 1700 :—" In Brook Field Market-place, at the East Corner of Hyde Park, is a Fair to be kept for the space of sixteen days, beginning with the 1st of May : the first three days for live cattle and leather ; with the same entertainments as at Bartholomew Fair : where there are shops to be let, ready

built, for all manner of tradesmen that annually keep fairs; and so to continue yearly at the same place."

The surprise that we may feel in thus learning that the business of buying and selling "cattle and leather" was to continue for three days, at the extreme West of our Metropolis, may be diminished by considering that the district was essentially a suburb, very thinly peopled; that to the North there were no streets; that where Apsley House now stands was a low inn, called the 'Hercules Pillars;' and a little farther West a road-side watering-place, known as the 'Triumphant Chariot;' that the villagers of Kensington and Chelsea seldom penetrated into London proper; that the Fair of Brook Field was, therefore, a matter of as much convenience as the great Fair of Bury, or any other of the country marts to which dealers brought their commodities. That it was something more than a market for cattle and leather, and a collection of stalls for the sale of gingerbread and beer, we learn from the announcement that "there are shops ready built for all manner of tradesmen."

The observance of May was one of those ancient peculiarities of our national character which required an essential change of manners to eradicate. Enactments could not put down May-poles and morris-dancers. A Parliamentary Ordinance, in 1644, directed all and singular May-poles, that are or shall be erected, to be taken down and removed by the constables of the parishes. The

May-pole in the Strand bowed its head to this ruthless command. There, in 1634, had the first stand of hackney-coaches been established—four coaches with men in livery, with fares arranged according to distances. But the May-pole did not fall unhonoured. There was a lament for the May-pole, “which no city, town, nor street can parallel;” and the Cavalier poet sighs over the “happy age,” and the “harmless days,” “when every village did a May-pole raise:” “times and men are changed,” he says. It was true. The May-pole in the Strand, and the hackney-coaches, were somewhat incongruous companions. After twenty years of strife and blood came the Restoration; and the Cavaliers believed that “times and men” were not changed. A new May-pole was to be raised, in 1661—a “stately cedar” of enormous height, which landmen were unable to raise; and so the Duke of York commanded seamen “to officiate the business;” and the May-pole was hoisted up, in four hours, to the sound of drum and trumpet; and a morris-dance was danced, to pipe and tabor, as blithely as in the days of Elizabeth; and “little children did much rejoice, and ancient people did clap their hands, saying, ‘Golden days begin to appear.’” In 1672 the mighty May-pole—“the most prodigious one for height that perhaps was ever seen,” says old Aubrey—was broken by a high wind. The Revolution came, and then the contests of faction, and a foreign war, gave the people graver subjects to think of than “Whitsun

ales and May games." The broken May-pole of the Strand gradually decayed and became a nuisance; but it had a higher destiny—typical of the changes of "times and men." In 1717 it was carted away to Wanstead, under the direction of Newton, and there set up to support the largest telescope in the world, which had been presented to the Royal Society by a French member, M. Huyon. The age of morrice-dancers was about to be superseded by the age of Science; and in due time would come the age of the Mechanical Arts. A century ago Hume said, "We cannot reasonably expect that a piece of woollen cloth will be brought to perfection in a nation that is ignorant of astronomy." The power-loom is the natural descendant of the telescope in Wanstead Park.

On May morning, in 1701, it is not unlikely that a few of the busy London population were dancing round the broken May-pole in the Strand. The chimney-sweepers had not yet taken exclusive possession of this festival; but the milk-maids, with their garlands, might be there as the representatives of rural innocence. The great bulk of the holiday-makers would abandon the May-pole for the keener excitement of May-Fair. For there (according to the evidence of a letter from Mr. Brian Fairfax, of 1701) would be attraction for all classes. "I wish you had been at May-Fair, where the rope-dancing would have recompensed your labour." There, according to the 'Tatler,' was Mr. Penkethman, with his tame elephant; and

there were wont to be "many other curiosities of nature." There were theatres with "gentlemen and ladies, who were the ornaments of the town, and used to shine in plumes and diamonds." There, was "Mrs. Saraband, so famous for her ingenious puppet-show"—the proprietress of "that rake-hell, Punch, whose lewd life and conversation had given so much scandal." There, was the conjuror, and the mountebank, and the fire-eater. But, more attractive than all, there, was "Lady Mary," the dancing lass—a very jewel, according to Brian Fairfax. "All the nobility in town were there. Pray ask my Lord Fairfax after her, who, though not the only lord by twenty, was every night an admirer of her, while the fair lasted." But there were great rarities of Art to be seen—specimens of ingenuity that might rival 1851. "There was the city of Amsterdam, well worth your seeing; every street, every individual house, was carved in wood, in exact proportion, one to another; the Stadthouse was as big as your hand." The city of Amsterdam might attract discreet observers, who kept out of the way of the bull-bait and the ducking-pond—polite sports to which Young England, in the last century, was somewhat addicted. Last of all, there was the sober business of the fair—the real work transacted in the "shops" that were "let, ready built, for all manner of tradesmen."

Of the commodities exposed for sale in these temporary shops would, first of all, be clothing. Of woollen fabrics there would be abundance. The

great work of legislation was to keep all the wool at home, and to make the people wear nothing but woollen garments. A writer of 1698 says :—" Men are very careful to preserve their rents ; but, above all, gentlemen are in the greatest disquiet for their wool. Both the living and the dead must be wrapt in wool ; nor is any law wanting to complete the business, but only one,—that our perukes should be made of wool." The great problem of legislation was how to encourage the growth of wool, and the manufacture of wool ; and a perpetual controversy was going on between the manufacturers and the agriculturists. The agriculturists were then the free-traders,—they wanted a foreign market for their wool : the manufacturers would have kept it all at home. But they both agreed that nothing which interfered with wool should be worn in England. Silk buttons were an article of dress : the silk was bought in foreign parts in exchange for our woollen manufacture ; but the making of silk buttons, says the Act of 1698, was discouraged by making buttons out of the shreds of cloth,—and thousands of men, women, and children, who made silk buttons with the needle, were impoverished ; and so a penalty of forty shillings was to be paid by any unhappy tailor who used his shreds to make buttons. But this microscopic legislation was always working in the dark. In 1697 the importation of foreign lace and needlework was absolutely prohibited, because the importation was " to the great discouragement

of the manufactures in this kingdom." In 1699 the Act of 1697 was repealed, on account of the decay of the woollen manufactures, because the prohibition of foreign lace and needlework "has been one great cause thereof, by being the occasion that our woollen manufactures are prohibited to be imported into Flanders." At May-Fair, in 1701, there must have been a keen competition amongst the fashionable ladies for the last chance of a purchase in the fair of Indian silks and calicoes; for after the 29th of September the wearing of all wrought silks of the manufacture of Persia, China, or India, and all coloured calicoes, was absolutely prohibited. The whole principle of our commercial legislation was protection,—to have no real exchange with other countries, and no free industry in our own commodities. The interest of the consumer was never regarded. The perpetual cry was the duty of employing the poor,—in regulating which employment the poor were starved. There was but one man of those days who had discovered the broad truths of commerce, which he promulgated in these words:—"The whole world, as to trade, is but one nation or people, and therein nations are as persons. * * * There can be no trade unprofitable to the people, for if any prove so, men leave it off. * * * No laws can set prices on trade. * * * All favour to one trade or interest is an abuse, and cuts off so much profit from the public." It is a hundred and sixty years ago since the great merchant, Sir Dudley

North, proclaimed these principles,—the highest application of which belongs to our day.

But, with all the defects of the class legislation that prevailed in the first year of the eighteenth century, England was advancing in commercial prosperity. In five years after the Peace of Ryswick the exports were more than doubled, and the mercantile marine more than quadrupled. The exports in 1701 were about six millions, of which about four millions consisted of our own produce and manufactures,—one-eighteenth part of our present exports. In 1701 the mercantile navy carried about three hundred thousand tons,—about one-fifteenth part of our present tonnage. The navigation laws, which it has required the slow growth of political philosophy to abolish, bit by bit, during two centuries, were held to be the foundation of our marine superiority. And yet, whilst an exclusive protection was given to English-built vessels, worked by English seamen, we utterly lost the old Greenland whale fishery for want of skilled crews. At the Revolution the agriculture of the country required a stimulus, so the bounty system was commenced. Foreign corn could not be brought in except when scarcity prevailed at home, and the exporters of English wheat received a bounty of five shillings a quarter, when the home price did not exceed forty shillings. The Dutch stored the wheat, which the bounty to the grower enabled them to buy at a cheaper rate than the average European price, and sold it us again, in

dear seasons, at a large profit. All commerce was a system of restriction, evasion, and compromise, resting upon the belief that one nation's gain was another's loss—and that commercial advantage was only to be measured by the balance of money received for commodities, and not by the exchange of the useful products of industry, varying with the peculiar soil, climate, and manners of the ex-changers.

At this period England was not, in any large sense of the term, a manufacturing country. With the exception of our woollen cloths—which amounted to nearly half our exports—some articles of raw produce were our chief shipments to foreign countries. The principal products of our mines were lead and tin, both of which we exported. Tin was in great demand, both at home and abroad, on account of the extension of luxurious habits, which required pewter plates instead of wooden trenchers. We raised and smelted no copper, but imported it unwrought. The greater part of our iron was also imported. No beds of rock-salt had been worked, —edible salt was imported,—for the wretched produce of our brine-pits was nauseous and injurious. And yet salt was of prime necessity at a period when the rotation of crops was unknown, and winter-food for sheep and cattle not being raised, the greater number were killed and salted at Martinmas. The coal-mines were limited in their produce,—partly by the want of machinery, and partly by the difficulty of communication. The

greater part of the coal consumed in the kingdom was sea-borne—hence called sea-coal ; but occasionally pack-horses travelled with coal inland, for the supply of blacksmith's forges. Factories, in the modern sense, did not exist. Even the great wool manufacture was, in most of its processes, domestic. Weavers left their shuttles idle in their cottages, when harvest work demanded their labour in the fields ; and this, not as a matter of choice, but under legal compulsion.

The Norwich and the Yorkshire looms were the subjects of minute regulation, as to wages and material. We imported spun silk for our Spitalfields looms. John Lombe built his Derby silk-mill in 1717. An ingenious adventurer, who made the attempt in 1702, was ruined. Our linen fabrics were imported from France, Germany, and Holland, and so were our threads. We manufactured hats and glass only after the accession of William the Third, when the war with France drove us to employ our capital and skill in their production. It was the same with paper. Before the Revolution there was little made in England, except brown paper. We imported our writing and printing papers from France and Holland. We imported our crockery-ware, which retained the name of Delft, even when our Potteries had begun to work. Sheffield produced its old "whittle"—the common knife for all uses ; but the finer cutlery was imported from France. We obtained most of our printing-type from Holland—not that England

wanted letter-founders, but that their characters were so rude, that our neighbours supplied us, till an ingenious artist, William Caslon, established his London foundry in 1720. There was a demand then for types, for the age of newspapers was come. When England was restricted to twenty master-printers—as it was before the Revolution—there was little need of skilful type-founders.

In the May-Fair of 1701 the news-venders would be busy. There would be half-a-dozen papers bearing the name of 'Intelligence,' or 'Intelligencer;' there would be similar varieties of the family of 'Flying Post,' and 'Mercury,' and 'Observer;' there would be 'Dawks's News Letter,' done upon good writing-paper, and blank space left, that any gentleman may write his own private business.' Each of these would hold less matter than a modern column. The writers upon Dawks's "good writing-paper," or any other paper, were not very numerous in a population of five millions. The Postage revenue was about sixty thousand pounds, which, averaging the rate of letters at threepence each (single sheets, carried under eighty miles, were twopence), would give us about a letter annually for each of the population; about two-thirds of the letters now delivered in one week; which show about eighteen letters annually for each of the population. The newspapers in May-Fair each had two or three advertisements—some of books, some of luxuries, which are now necessities of life—such as tea at twenty-four shillings a pound, loaf sugar

at eleven shillings, coffee at six shillings. All had advertisements of lotteries. Every description of retail traffic was then carried on by gambling. At the 'Eagle and Child,' on Ludgate Hill, all sorts of fine silks and goods were to be had at seven pounds ten shillings a ticket; Mrs. Ogle's plate, value twenty pounds, was at sixpence a ticket; Mr. William Morris, "the fairest of dealers," draws his lottery out of two wheels by two parish-boys, giving one hundred pounds for half-a-crown. There were lotteries drawing in May-Fair, and the shimble-rig was not unknown.

The May morning of 1701 sees the busy concourse in Brook Field of sellers and buyers. There is the Jew from Houndsditch and the grazier from Finchley. From the distant Bermondsey comes the tanner, with his peltry and his white leather for harness. Beer is freely drunk. Tobacco perfumes the air from one sunrise to another. It is almost difficult to believe that eleven million pounds of tobacco were then annually consumed by a population of five millions; but so say the records. The graziers and the drovers were hungry: they indulged themselves with the seldom-tasted wheaten bread of the luxurious Londoners. They had waded through roads scarcely practicable for horsemen. Pedestrians, who kept the crown of the causeway, on whose sides were perilous sloughs and foul ditches, travelled in company, for fear of the frequent highwayman and footpad. Happy were they when the sun lighted the high-

way from Tottenham or Tyburn ; for not a lantern was to be seen, and the flickering link made the morning fog seem denser than its reality. That May-day morning has little cheerfulness in its aspect.

The afternoon comes. Then the beasts and the leather are sold—and the revelry begins. It lasts through the night. We need not describe the brutality of the prize-fighting, nor record the licentiousness of the Merry Andrew. All the poetical character of the old May sports was gone. It was a scene of drunkenness and quarrel. May-Fair became a nuisance. The Grand Jury presented it seven years after ; and the puppets, and the rope-dancers, and the gambling-booths, the bruisers, and the thieves had to seek another locality. When Fashion obtained possession of the site, the form of profligacy was changed. The thimble-riggers were gone ; but Dr. Keith married all comers to his chapel, “with no questions asked, for a guinea, any time after midnight till four in the afternoon.”

JOHN AUBREY, AND HIS EMINENT MEN.

THERE are few books that I take up more willingly in a vacant half-hour, than the scraps of biography which Aubrey, the antiquary, addressed to Anthony à Wood; and which were published from the original manuscripts in the Ashmolean Museum, in 1813. These little fragments are so quaint and characteristic of the writer—so sensible in some passages and so absurd in others—so full of what may be called the Prose of Biography, with reference to the objects of historical or literary reverence,—and so encomiastic with regard to others whose memories have wholly perished in the popular view—that I shall endeavour to look at them a little consecutively, as singular examples of what a clever man thought of his contemporaries and of others who were famous in his day, whether their opinions accord with, or are opposed to, our present estimates.

And first of John Aubrey himself.

Our common notion of the man used to be that he was a dreaming credulous old gossip, with some literary pretensions, and nothing more. He believed in astrology, in omens, dreams, apparitions, voices, knockings. Is he without followers, even at this hour? Anthony à Wood, who was under

many obligations to his correspondence, calls him "a shiftless person, roving and maggotty-headed." "Roving," indeed he was ; for he wandered up and down the land when travelling was not quite so easy as now ; and, according to the testimony of Gough, an antiquary after the sober fashion of the race, "first brought us acquainted with the earliest monuments on the face of the country—the remains of Druidism, and of Roman, Saxon, and Danish fortifications." "Shiftless" too, he might be called. He possessed an estate in Kent, which was destroyed by an irruption of the sea ; he became involved in law-suits ; he made an unhappy marriage ; in a word, to use his own astrological solution of his misfortunes, he was "born in an evil hour, Saturn directly opposing my ascendant." But he was not "shiftless," in the sense of one who had no proper business in life. He wanted little for his support, and as he had rich friends his dependence was not very burthensome to them. He lived about in country houses with kind squires, with whom he "took his diet and sweet otiums." What could the man do when his estates were gone, but to enjoy what he called "a happy delitescency"—the obscurity of one who was never idle in noting down what he saw around him, for the use of others, or the benefit of those who were to come after him. He had no constructive power to make a great original book. His age was not an age of periodicals, when his gossiping propensities might have shaped themselves into articles

fit for the literary market. It is true that he might have become an almanac maker like some of his friends;—but perhaps there was a glut of the commodity. He had nothing for it but to lounge about in coffee-houses; and go to meetings of the Royal Society; and gossip with Mr. Evelyn and Mr. Isaac Walton; and venture to ask Mr. D'Avenant something about Shakspeare, and speak of Milton to Mr. Dryden when they met at Will's; and correspond with Mr. Tanner, and Mr. à Wood, the famous antiquaries; and study a horoscope with Mr. Dee, or Mr. Vincent Wing, the astrologers. If he had concentrated his power of picking up anecdotes, and recording sayings, upon more of the really eminent of his time, as he has done upon Hobbes and Milton, he might have left Boswell without the merit of being the first, as well as the greatest, in his line. Wood, according to Hearné, used to say of him—"Look! yonder goes such a one, who can tell such and such stories; and I'll warrant Mr. Aubrey will break his neck down stairs rather than miss him." My venerable friend Mr. Britton, in his 'Memoir of John Aubrey*' terms the notice of him by D'Israeli, in the 'Quarrels of Authors,' "hasty," for D'Israeli calls him "the little Boswell of his day." We would desire no higher compliment for our "curious and talkative inquirer." D'Israeli certainly does

* Mr. Britton's Memoir is a handsome 4to volume, published by the Wiltshire Topographical Society; it contains a great deal of curious matter, collected with much care.

not mean to lower Aubrey; for in the very passage which suggests the "little Boswell," Aubrey has been giving an account how Hobbes composed his 'Leviathan,' and then D'Israeli terms this passage "very curious for literary students."

Aubrey was born in 1626. He lived seventy-two years in the greatest period of transition in our English history. The despotic Buckingham ruled England when Aubrey was first opening his inquisitive eyes;—the Whig Somers was Chancellor when he closed them. He lived through the Civil War, the Commonwealth, the Restoration, the Revolution. When he first heard of literature, men were talking of Shakspeare, and Jonson, and Beaumont, and Fletcher;—when he prattled about his septuagenarian memories, Milton and Cowley were getting obsolete. The opinions and manners of the people were wholly changed. Aubrey gives a remarkable instance of this change. When the civil wars broke out, Hollar, the famous engraver, went into the Low Countries, where he stayed till about 1649. "I remember he told me, that when he first came into England, which was a serene time of peace, the people, both poor and rich, did look cheerfully; but at his return, he found the countenances of the people all changed—melancholy, spiteful as if bewitched."* In another place† Aubrey writes, with that half-poetry of his nature which made him superstitious, "Before

* *Lives*, p. 402.

† *Anecdotes and Traditions*, edited by J. Thom; p. 102.

printing, Old Wives' Tales were ingenious ; and since printing came in fashion, till a little before the Civil Wars, the ordinary sort of people were not taught to read. Now-a-days, books are common, and most of the poor people understand letters ; and the many good books, and variety of turns of affairs, have put all the old fables out of doors. And the divine art of printing, and gunpowder, have frightened away Robin Good-fellow and the Fairies." Bishop Corbet thought that the fairies went out when Protestantism came in. According to Aubrey they lingered till the people became readers. "The variety of turns of affairs" made them readers. The change was beginning when Aubrey was in his swaddling-clothes. One almost of the latest masques of Jonson which was presented before James I., 'Time Vindicated,' whispers an echo of that turmoil whose hoarse sounds were still distant. Two "ragged rascals" are thus described in the antemasque :—

"One is his printer in disguise, and keeps
His press in a hollow tree, where to conceal him,
He works by glow-worm light, the moon's too open.
The other zealous rag is the compositor,
Who, in an angle where the ants inhabit,
(The emblems of his labours,) will sit curl'd
Whole days and nights, and work his eyes out for him."

This was the age of libels—"straws," as Selden has it, "thrown up to show which way the wind blows." The "press in a hollow tree" was no mere poetical exaggeration. That terrible machine did its work in silence and darkness. It laboured

like a mole. If it was sought for in the garret, it was in the cellar; if it was hunted to the hovel, it found a hiding-place in the palace. The minds of men were in a state of preternatural activity. Prerogative had tampered with opinion, and opinion was too strong for it. The public mind, for the first time in England, began to want *news*—coarse provender for opinion to chew and ruminate. Jonson wrote his ‘Staple of News,’ in which we have an office with a principal and clerks busily employed in collecting and recording news, to be circulated by letter. The countrywoman at the office would have

“A groatworth of any news, I care not what,
To carry down this Saturday to our vicar.”

There was then, in reality, a weekly pamphlet of news published under the high-sounding editorial name of *Mercurius Britannicus*. Jonson had a right notion of what gave authority to such a publication:—

“See divers men’s opinions ! unto some
The very printing of ’em makes them news,
That have not the heart to believe anything
But what they see in print.”

Jonson called the newspaper “a weekly cheat to draw money;” and he sets about ridiculing the desire for news, as if it were an ephemeral taste easily put down, and people had a diseased appetite for news, “made all at home, and no syllable of truth in them.” The people were thirsting for pamphlets of news because therein they found

glimpses of truth. The age was indeed credulous ; but credulity and curiosity are nearly allied ; and curiosity goes before comparison, and comparison goes before discontent, and discontent goes before revolt ; and so in less than twenty years after Jonson's 'Staple of News' the country was plunged in civil war.

Anthony à Wood asked Aubrey to write these 'Lives,' seeing that he "was fit for it, by reason of his general acquaintance ;" and, in 1680, Aubrey sends the Oxford antiquary "Minutes," which "may easily be reduced into order." He says, that he undertook the task, "having now not only lived above half a century of years in the world, but have been also much tumbled up and down in it, which hath made me so well known. Besides the modern advantage of coffee-houses in this great city—before which men knew not how to be acquainted, but with their own relations or societies—I might add that I come of a longævous race, by which means I have wiped some feathers off the wings of time for several generations." These lives, as we have said, were first printed from the Ashmolean Manuscripts in 1813. They had been previously examined and used by Warton ; and by Malone, who made a transcript of them. He also made some arrangement of the scattered papers. In the volumes of 1813 they are given alphabetically. Our notices will pretend to no system ; but will be held together by some slight thread of association.

The first name that presents itself in this alpha-

betical order is that of "Sir Robert Aiton, Knight."* How many have looked upon his "monumental bust," in the south side of the choir of Westminster Abbey, without knowing what Aubrey tells us, that "Sir Robert was one of the best poets of his time." How many would have believed Aubrey, before our old poetry began to be appreciated, when he further records that "Mr. Jo. Dryden says he has seen verses of his, some of the best of that age, printed with some other verses?" Look in the 'Biographia Britannica,' and you will find no Robert Aiton. Look in any collection of English poetry, and you will find no Robert Aiton. This Scot, a courtier of James I., was indeed known as the friend of Jonson, who told Drummond "Sir Robert Ayton loved him dearly." Burns found one of Ayton's poems in James Watson's 'Collection of Scots Poems,' and thought he "improved the simplicity of the sentiments by giving them a Scots dress."† It is not easy for one poet of genius to make an adaptation of the work of another poet. Let us hear forgotten Robert Ayton :

"I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair,
And I might have gone near to love thee,
Had I not found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak had power to move thee.
But I can let thee now alone,
As worthy to be loved by none.

* The name is more properly spelt "Ayton."

† See Burns' Song, beginning—

"I do confess thou art sae fair,
I wad been o'er the lugs in love,
Had I not found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak, thy heart could muve."

"I do confess thou'rt sweet, yet find
 Thee such an unthrift of thy sweets,
 Thy favours are but like the wind,
 Which kisseth every thing it meets;
 And since thou can'st love more than one
 Thou'rt worthy to be kissed by none."

But there is another poem by Burns, whose truth and tenderness has made many a heart thrill. He said himself that he "took it down from an old man's singing." But "all his editors," says Allan Cunningham, "have considered it to have been written, either wholly or partially, by Burns." Robert Ayton, whose memory might have died out, even though Dryden had praised his verses, if it had not been for the care of "the Bannatyne Club," and the accidental discovery of a MS. Collection of his Poems,* was the writer of *these* lines:

"Should old acquaintance be forgot,
 And never thought upon,
 The flames of love extinguished,
 And freely past and gone?
 Is thy kind heart now grown so cold
 In that loving breast of thine,
 That thou can'st never once reflect
 On old langsyne?"

What is fame, when such verses as these we have given were wrapt up in mummy-cloth for two centuries? How truly does Aubrey say, "What uncertainty do we find in printed histories? They either treading too near on the heels of truth that they dare not speak plain; or else for want of

* The Poems of Sir Robert Ayton, edited by Charles Roger, 1844.

intelligence, things being antiquated, become too obscure and dark."

Who was Ayton, amongst Aubrey's 'Eminent Men?' The "obscure and dark" has been made clear in his case. Who was Gregorie? Our antiquary tells us he was "the famous peruque-maker," and, moreover, that he "was buried at St. Clements' Danes church door." Famous indeed he was, according to this authority, for Baron Gregory, Baron of the Exchequer, wrote his epitaph in rhyme; and in Cotgrave's French Dictionary perukes are called Gregorians. Who can now tell us of the fashion of Gregory's perukes? "Printed histories" are silent. Who was — Goodwyn? "He was a general scholar and had a delicate wit; was a great historian and an excellent poet. He wrote, among other things, a Pastoral, acted at Ludlow, about 1637, an exquisite piece." Alas, for Goodwyn! In 1680, Aubrey also writes, "he was as fine a gentleman as any in England, though now forgot." How capricious is fame! There *was* a Pastoral—a Mask, I will call it—acted at Ludlow in 1634, which will never be forgot. The author of that poem had ample fame, too, in his life-time.* But no foreigners, I fear, would see the house and chamber where Goodwyn was born. Aubrey himself is somewhat a niggard of his praise as to another truly "fine gentleman." Richard Lovelace, he tells us, wrote a poem called 'Lucasta;' but no word of eulogy for Lovelace. "He was an extraordinary hand-

* See page 241.

some man, but proud * * *. George Petty, haberdasher, in Fleet Street, carried twenty shillings to him every Monday morning from Sir — Many, and Charles Cotton, but was never repaid." Poor Lovelace ! " He died in a cellar, in Long Acre," says Aubrey. Even in a cellar, he that wrote these lines must have had consolations which his persecutors could not feel :

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage ;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage.
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty."

The cavalier, Lovelace, sings,

"When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty."

The republican friend of Milton, Andrew Marvell, according to Aubrey, "would never drink hard in company, and was wont to say, that he would not play the good-fellow in any man's company in whose hands he would not trust his life." In the early days of the Restoration Marvell saved Milton from the wrath of the Royalists ; but with his longing for a constitutional government he knew there was danger in that profligate court of "the merry monarch," and he clung for safety to the "allaying

Thames," at least in social life. But the coffee-house gossip of Aubrey, and his "longævous" remembrances, are very minute about the "follies of the wise," and their secret indulgences, of which "History" very properly doubteth. Thus he tells us that Marvell "kept bottles of wine at his lodging, and many times he would drink liberally by himself to refresh his spirits and exalt his muse." The domestic tipplings which Aubrey records of the "eminent" are very various, and somewhat amusing. Marvell drank wine to exalt his muse. Not so Bacon. "His Lordship would often drink a good draught of strong beer (March beer) to bedwards, to lay his working fancy asleep, which otherwise would keep him from sleeping the great part of the night." Aubrey has a "small-beer" anecdote, too, of Bacon which I should blush to record, if I had the slightest belief in it: "In his Lordship's prosperity Sir Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, was his great friend and acquaintance; but when he was in disgrace and want, he was so unworthy as to forbid his butler to let him have any more small-beer, which he had often sent for, his stomach being nice, and the small-beer of Gray's Inn not liking his palate." Where could Aubrey have picked up this bit for his scandalous chronicle? Bacon died the year Aubrey was born; and Greville two years after. I dare say Aubrey and Drummond were both somewhat nearer the truth, in the matter of "Canary," when their subject was Ben Jonson. "He would many times exceed in drink,"

says Aubrey. "Drink was one of the elements in which he lived," says Drummond. Aubrey, however, is circumstantial about the influence of the element: "Canary was his beloved liquor: then he would tumble home to bed, and when he had thoroughly perspired, then to study." I should have thought that the roystering cavalier poet, John Cleveland, would have furnished Aubrey with some bibulous anecdotes; but he simply says, "He and Sam Butler, &c., of Gray's Inn, did hold a club every night." No private toss-potting for them. Who were the *et-cæteras*? Surely Robert Herrick was of the number. Of him Aubrey has no record. But he "that kept a pet pig which he taught to drink out of a tankard,"* must surely have been a true clubbable man, during the thirteen years when he was wandering in London, away from his dull vicarage of Dean Prior, from which he had been ejected. How he revels and luxuriates in his "Welcome to Sack!" How rapturously he invokes the great "Ben" to

"Meet at those lyric feasts
Made at the Sun,
The Dog, the Triple Tun,
Where we such clusters had
As made us nobly wild, not mad."

These poets have left a Bacchanalian odour behind them. But there is a smack of tipsy jollity in every grade of society, as if in defiance of the Puritans. If Denham, who, according to Aubrey,

* See *Quarterly Review*, vol. iv. p. 172.

"was generally temperate in drinking," was betrayed on one occasion, after being "merry at the tavern," into the fancy "to get a plasterer's brush and a pot of ink, and blot out all the signs between Temple Bar and Charing Cross,"—what shall we say of Dr. Butler, a famous physician, who, our veritable record tells, "would many times go to the tavern, but drink by himself: about nine or ten at night old Nell comes for him with a candle and lanthorn, and says, 'Come home, you drunken beast?'" We wonder at Nell; for drunkenness in the days of James I. was the rule of good society. It was an awful time when Sir John Harrington writes, "The ladies abandon their sobriety, and are seen to roll about in intoxication,"—and sincerely laments "that the Gunpowder fright is got out of all our heads, and we are going on, hereabouts, as if the devil was contriving every man should blow up himself by wild riot, excess, and devastation of time and temperance." It is no wonder that in that century, Aubrey, and every gossiping writer, has something to tell of good-fellowship that went beyond the limits of reason,—and of that degradation of the learned, the witty, and the high-born, which we now associate with ignorance, stupidity, and menial condition. A great change for the better has taken place in our own day amongst all ranks.

But whilst we flatter ourselves that we are marvellously improved with regard to the grosser vices, let us be quite sure that we have retained

the elevation of character that in those days made men fast friends and generous enemies. Aubrey has plenty of anecdotes which show that in a time of fiery politics and common danger there were high qualities evolved out of the strifes of the time, and that if "men fell out they knew not why," they could lay aside dirty revenges and life-long hatreds. George Withers got Denham's estate from the Parliament. After the Restoration Withers is in danger, for he had written bitter things against the Royalists. "Sir John Denham went to the King, and desired his Majesty not to hang him, for that whilst George Withers lived, he, Sir John, should not be the worst poet in England." The kind heart is as admirable as the ready wit. D'Avenant held a command under the Marquis of Newcastle in the Civil Wars, when he had the custody of two aldermen of York, who were contumacious in the matter of ransom. He treated the aldermen kindly, and at last suffered them to escape. When D'Avenant was in danger of his life from the Parliament, the aldermen made a journey to London, and succeeded in accomplishing his safety. Harrington, the republican, was a friend of Charles I. : "The King loved his company, only he would not endure to hear of a Commonwealth ; and Mr. Harrington passionately loved his Majesty. Mr. Harrington and the King often disputed about government." Sir James Long was colonel of horse in a Royalist brigade. "Oliver, Protector, hawking at Hounslow Heath, discoursing

with him, fell in love with his company, and commanded him to wear his sword, and to meet him a hawking, which made the strict Cavaliers look on him with an evil eye." The chivalric spirit was not quite extinct.

If the Boswell of the first coffee-houses gives us glimpses of the romance of biography, he more frequently lets down the heroic into the common ways of common men. I shall continue to gaze upon the richest side of the shield, in spite of Aubrey. When I think of Falkland, I shall see him as Clarendon has painted him. Let me look at the Secretary of Charles as he presents himself to my view, on the night before the battle of Newbury. The watch-fires of two armies are lighted. The King has marched into Newbury that afternoon. The Earl of Essex has advanced from Hungerford, and has found the royal forces in possession of the town, and of the low meadows immediately adjoining. He takes up his position on a little hill about a mile distant. It is midnight. Charles is sleeping. The fiery Rupert dreams of exterminating the rebel trained-bands. Falkland can take no rest. He walks by the side of the river amongst the outposts. He comes before me, shaping his melancholy thoughts into language :—
 " Yes, John Hampden, my once friend, my beloved enemy, would I could follow thee to-morrow ! Three months ago thou didst ride blithely on a sunny morning into the field of Chalgrave, and shortly thou didst ride out of the field with thy

head hanging down and thy hands upon the neck of thy horse. Three weeks of agony, John, and then to the grave of thy fathers. When we stood together, in our wordy war against exorbitances, we little thought it would come to this. Oh, Peace ! Peace ! ”

Shall I give up this shadow of Falkland—shall I doubt Clarendon, who says that he rushed into danger, “that all might see that his impatience for peace proceeded not from pusillanimity, or fear to adventure his own person.” Aubrey calls those who took the heroic view of Falkland’s death “superfine discoursing politicians,” and says, “I have been well informed, by those that best knew him, and knew intrigues behind the curtain, as they say, that it was the grief of the death of Mistress Moray, a handsome lady at court, who was his mistress, and whom he loved above all creatures, was the true cause of his being so madly guilty of his own death.” It may be. The private grief and the public were not incompatible. But I will not believe Aubrey when he deprecates those whom history loves. I will not believe that Falkland “in his youth was very wild, and also mischievous, as being apt to stab.” I will not believe the story of Greville denying Bacon small-beer. I can believe that Raleigh “was damnable proud.” I cannot believe of Sir Henry Saville, Provost of Eton, that he said “when a young scholar was recommended to him for a good wit—‘Out upon him, I’ll have nothing to do with him ; give me

the plodding student. If I would look to wits I would go to Newgate: there be the wits!" Some day or other I may be brought to believe what Aubrey says of Mr. William Shakspeare,—“his father was a butcher; and I have been told heretofore by some of the neighbours, that when he was a boy he exercised his father's trade, but when he killed a calf he would do it in a high style, and make a speech.” But I will not believe that the great Harvey, who discovered the circulation of the blood by patient induction, said of Bacon, “he writes philosophy like a Lord Chancellor.”

Some of the modes in which Aubrey deals with the habits and opinions of men are very characteristic, not only of the writer but of his age. Newspapers were more feared than admired. Sir John Birkenhead, who was the editor of one of the earliest newspapers, ‘*Mercurius Aulicus*,’ “would lie damnably.” A very singular editorial quality that! Admiral Blake, when at Oxford, “would steal swans.” We may think less harshly, now, of Shakspeare's alleged deer-stealing. Of Butler he writes, “Satirical wits disoblige whom they converse with;” and yet Butler, according to his estimate, was “a good fellow.” The habits and tempers of the race are not altered. He tells some stories of Bishop Corbet—not very clerical, but funny: “After he was Doctor of Divinity he sang ballads at the cross at Abingdon, on a market-day. He and some of his camerades were

at the tavern by the cross ; the ballad-singer complained he had no custom—he could not put off his ballads. The jolly Doctor puts off his gown and puts on the ballad-singer's leathern jacket, and being a handsome man, and had a rare full voice, he presently vended a great many, and had a great audience." We can believe this of the author of 'The Fairies' Farewell.' There is real music in these lines :

"When Tom came home from labour,
Or Ciss to milking rose,
Then merrily went their tabour,
And nimbly went their toes."

Aubrey has a story of Sir Miles Fleetwood, Recorder of London, which sounds a little apocryphal : "He was a very severe hanger of highwaymen, so that the fraternity were resolved to make an example of his worship, which they executed in this manner :—They lay in wait for him not far from Tyburn, as he was to come from his house in Bucks ; had a halter in readiness ; brought him under the gallows, fastened the rope about his neck, his hands tied behind him and servants bound, and then left him to the mercy of his horse, which he called Ball. So he cried, 'Ho, Ball ! Ho, Ball !' and it pleased God that his horse stood still till somebody came along, which was half a quarter of an hour or more." Was the eminent example of the highwaymen of London known to the Porteous mob of Edinburgh in the

next century? Lord Chief Justice Popham, according to Aubrey, deserved well to have been upon Ball instead of the active Recorder—Ball would have been wiser than to have stood still with Popham. For the Chief Justice obtained a park and a manor to save an honourable murderer's life. "He for several years addicted himself but little to the study of the laws, but profligate company, and was wont to take a purse with them. His wife considered her and his condition, and at last prevailed upon him to lead another life, and to stick to the study of the law, which, upon her importunity, he did, being then about thirty years old. He spake to his wife to provide a very good entertainment for his camerades to take leave of them." Memorandum for a pair of historical pictures by Mr. Ward or Mr. Egg : The barrister at his rogues' feast ; the judge charging the jury for the murderer.

Some of Aubrey's Oxford recollections are amusing illustrations of University manners. Doctor Kettle is preaching at St. Mary's. The learned fellows are bound to hear Doctor Kettle, but not so their lackeys, and so the Divine concludes a sermon thus :—"But now I see it is time for me to shut up my book, for I see the Doctors' men come in, wiping their beards, from the ale-house." A good specimen, this, of a funeral-sermon, on a gentleman commoner, who died of the small-pox :—"He was the finest, sweetest young gentleman ; it

did do my heart good to see him walk along the quadrangle. We have an old proverb, that hungry dogs will eat dirty puddings ; but I must needs say for this young gentleman, that he always loved sweet things." A great geometry professor was Doctor Kettle. "As they were reading and circumscribing figures, said he, 'I will show you how to inscribe a triangle in a quadrangle. Bring a pig into the quadrangle, and I will set the college dog at him, and he will take the pig by the ear ; then come I and take the dog by the tail, and the hog by the tail, and so you have a triangle in a quadrangle.'" It was unkind in Aubrey to tell posterity these stories of the Principal of his own College, for the sagacious Doctor "observed, that the houses that had the smallest beer had the most drunkards, for it forced them to go into the town to comfort their stomachs ; wherefore Dr. Kettle always had in his college excellent beer, not better to be had in Oxon."

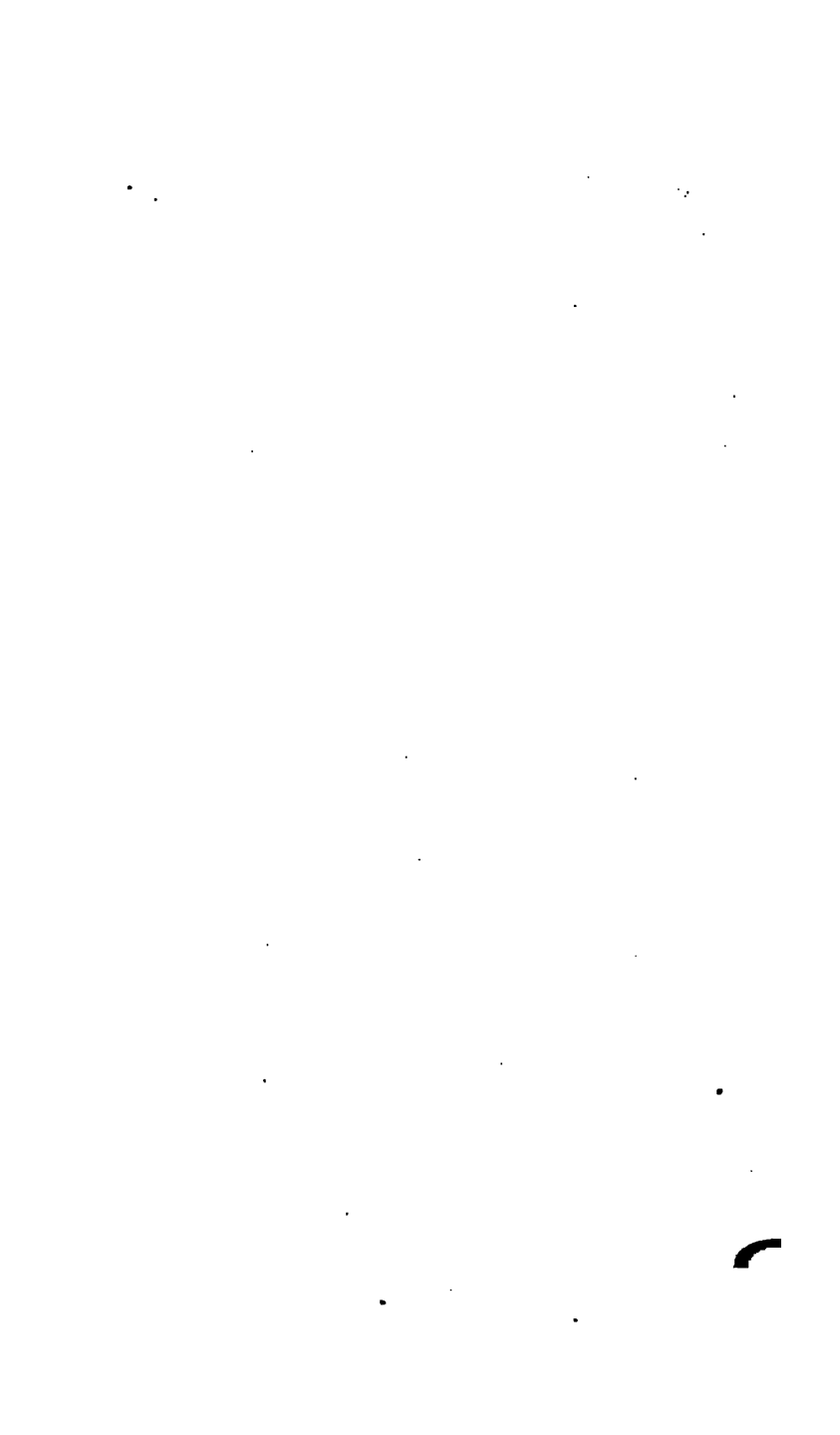
I have lingered about good old Aubrey somewhat too long, rather picking out some of his less familiar scraps than those which have been accepted in serious Biography. What he collected about Milton was really valuable ; and so of Hobbes, with whom he was intimate. Aubrey, and all writers of his class, however trivial be their stories and quaint their remarks, have a value beyond that of the solemn annalists of the public deeds of past generations, who put down very little from their

own knowledge. "We can read anywhere of the battle-field and the council-chamber—show us, if you can, the domestic interior. We are sated with state apartments; let us have a peep into the kitchen or the housekeeper's room." *

* Quarterly Review, vol. xciii. p. 463.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET,
AND CHANCING CROSS.





BOUND BY
EDMONDS & REMNANTS
LONDON





BOUND BY
MUSEUM

